ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1

Dollywood: Reader defends Plinky's ex-partner

NEWS / A2

Navy command turnover aborted

ACROSS / A15

Militant woman leader killed in Bataan

SPORTS / A19

'Bata' Reyes pockets P10.8 million in US billiards shootout

Nida's lawyer questions filing of murder charges

By Armand N. Nocum

WINDING UP ITS SECOND ROUND OF PRELIMINARY investigations, the Department of Justice panel probing the Nida Blanca case has recommended the filing of murder charges against Mike Martinez as a principal, Elena de la Paz as an accomplice and retired

NIDA'S/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Tuesday, December 6, 2005 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 361 P18

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Still dying to win the lotto? Read on

COVINGTON, KENtucky—For Mack W. Metcalf and his estranged second wife, Virginia G. Merida, sharing a $34-million lottery jackpot in 2000 meant escaping poverty at breakneck speed.

STILL/ A6

AYOKO NANG MANALO... HIHINGI NA LANG AKO NG BALATO!

Garci turns tables on solons

Lawyer says 20-30 lawmakers made calls

By Philip C. Tubeza

AFTER THE GLORY OF the Games, Garci is back in the limelight.

Accusing lawmakers of hypocrisy, the lawyer of Virgilio Garcillano yesterday named eight out of 20 to 30 congressmen who, he claimed, had talked to the former election commissioner during the 2004 polls.

"We believe that they are persons most qualified to speak as to the high integrity and unquestionable character of former Commissioner Garcillano," lawyer Eddie Tamondong said, trying to turn the tables on his client's detractors.

Tamondong said he got the names from an "initial list" that Garcillano gave him and these lawmakers might "serve as character witnesses for and on behalf of my client."

Tamondong identified the eight as House Minority Leader Francis Escudero, Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano, Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, Cebu Rep. Clavel Martinez, Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon, Malabon-Navotas Rep. Federico Sandoval II and Quezon Representa-

GARCI TURNS/ A8

AFP

TURNOVER: Thai Deputy Prime Minister Suwat Liptapanlop (right) accepts the hosting rights for the 2007 Southeast Asian Games from Jose Cojuangco, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, during the closing ceremony of the 23rd SEA Games in Manila. Looking on is President Macapagal-Arroyo.

RP campaign ends in blaze of glory

By Roy Luarca

THE PHILIPPINES' SMASHING campaign in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games got its fitting ending yesterday.

The Filipinos officially wound up with their first overall championship and the Games, despite cheating allegations that were later denied, ended in a blaze of fireworks and a show of unity by the 11 competing nations at the Quirino Grandstand at the Rizal Park.

Leading from start to finish, the Philippines posted its best ever haul of 113 gold medals, 84 silvers and 94 bronzes, eclipsing its previous highest output of 91-62-84 when the country last hosted the Games in 1991.

Thailand, an 11-time SEAG overall champion which will host the 2007 edition, ended up second with an 87-78-118 tally.

Vietnam, which copped the general championship when it hosted the 2003 Games, wound up third with a 71-68-89 hoard even as it completed an eight-gold sweep of the closing chess competitions in Tagaytay City yesterday.

Showing remarkable improvement in wushu, boxing, aquatics, muay thai, rowing, fencing, wrestling and sweeping the six golds in the traditional boat races, the Filipinos more than doubled their 49-55-75 production of two years ago.

The Filipino wushu artists turned out to be the most productive with 11 golds, displacing the Vietnamese as champions.

Powered by US-honed swimmer Miguel Molina and China-trained diver Shiela Mae Perez, aquatics turned in nine golds, surpassing its contribution of five in Hanoi.

RP CAMPAIGN/ A6

SEAG FINAL MEDAL TALLY

Country	G	S	B	Total
PHILIPPINES	**113**	**84**	**94**	**291**
THAILAND	87	78	118	283
VIETNAM	71	68	89	228
MALAYSIA	61	50	64	175
INDONESIA	49	79	89	217
SINGAPORE	42	32	55	129
MYANMAR	17	34	48	99
LAOS	3	4	12	19
BRUNEI	1	2	2	5
CAMBODIA	0	3	9	12
TIMOR LESTE	0	0	3	3
TOTAL	**444**	**434**	**583**	**1,461**

Philsoc website

More SEAG stories in Sports

We have rediscovered best in Filipino—GMA

By Jasmine W. Payo

THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF worries, scandals and controversies. But in the end, there were only pride and relief in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games for a nation starved for glory.

With the overall championship crown in hand, the Philippines bid farewell to more than 6,000 athletes and sports officials from 11 countries at the closing ceremonies yesterday at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

"We are on the road to becoming a sports power in Asia on the back of Filipino fighting spirit and solidarity," said President Macapagal-Arroyo, elated by the Philippines topping the medal race for the first time since joining the biennial meet in 1977.

"We have rediscovered the best in the Filipino, setting aside differences and showing the world that we can move as one and go for the gold with incomparable unity and teamwork," said the President, who officially declared

WE HAVE/ A6

Hard labor for Garcia? Well, not really

By Luige A. del Puerto and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IT SOUNDED LIKE A TERRIBLE fate but the penalty of "two years of hard labor" imposed by a military court on ex-Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia may be all an empty phrase, based on Philippine military practice.

Military prosecutor Col. Al Perreras yesterday said no officer who had received the penalty had been actually subjected to such punishment.

But convicted enlisted men had been made to spruce up military grounds, clean up living quarters and do other menial jobs, he said.

This means Garcia will not be made to so much as sweep the streets of Camp Crame, where he is now being held.

"In practice, this (hard labor) is not carried out," Perreras told the INQUIRER. "It's inappropriate for an officer to do hard labor."

In military parlance, "hard labor" means "extra fatigue work," he said, adding: "Officers do not render extra fatigue work."

HARD LABOR/ A8

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MALANG

Across the Nation: So many stories, so little space

By Jun Bandayrel
National Editor

PERHAPS "no one understood or was as strongly convinced of the importance of expanding the INQUIRER's capability to report the news from the rest of the country ... as Eugenia D. Apostol, the newspaper's founding chair," according to former Across the Nat ion editor Ralph Chee Kee.

"In the early 1990s, she suited that conviction to action and initiated the steps that created what are now the well-equipped regional bureaus," Chee Kee said.

The PDI Visayas Bureau was the first to be officially established in Cebu City on Aug. 1, 1991. Almost immediately after, the PDI Mindanao Bureau was opened in Davao City. On Sept. 5, 1993, it received a fax message that read "We are in business" from the PDI Northern Luzon Bureau in Baguio City.

The nationwide structure was completed five years later, in March 1998, when the PDI Southern Luzon Bureau was put up in Legazpi City.

It was a far cry from the early years of the INQUIRER when a handful of dedicated correspondents dictated their pieces by telephone and mailed their photos to the INQUIRER. They reported directly to the provincial editor, who handled the "From Aparri to Jolo" Section. After a reader pointed out a territorial inaccuracy, the page was renamed "From Batanes to Tawi-Tawi" and later "Across the Nation."

Only two of the "pioneers"—Carla P. Gomez of Bacolod City and Anselmo S. Roque of Nueva Ecija—are still actively writing for the paper today.

The bureaus then occupied small rented offices.

"Technologically, we were poor—a single telephone line, a laptop (which was the personal property of the bureau chief then), typewriters and a fax machine. The aircon unit came months later. But we didn't complain. Processing the stories was even harder," said Nico Alconaba, chief of the Mindanao Bureau.

In the early 1990s, correspon-

ACROSS THE NATION/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2005

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of the country will be cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/12/06/05

Thai, RP corruption worsens – poll

HONG KONG—MULTINATIONALS PERCEIVE corruption is getting worse in Thailand and in the Philippines but is declining elsewhere in Asia, a report released yesterday shows.

The multinationals say corruption is the major obstacle to investment and business growth in Asia's developing economies.

Among 12 Asian economies covered, India, China and Indonesia and Vietnam still had high levels of corruption but their governments were seen to be making headway in fighting the problem, according to a survey by a Hong Kong-based think-tank, Political & Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd. (Perc).

In contrast, Hong Kong and Singapore — two of the most developed Asian economies — were rated as the places where graft is most under control, Perc said.

Singapore topped the survey with a score of 0.89 where the best grade is zero and the worst is 10. Arch economic rival Hong Kong was second at 1.22 while Indonesia was the worst with a score of 9.44.

Japan was third, followed by South Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, China, India, the Philippines and Vietnam.

China is making the most progress, it said.

Perc noted that the survey respondents were the companies that actually make investments in the region. The survey was done between September and October this year covering 96 different companies (47 American, 33 European, 9 Australian, and 7 Canadian) with the majority holding offices in either Singapore or Hong Kong.

The gradings of Singapore and Hong Kong reflect confidence in the judiciary system which is why the former British colonies have remained big recipients of foreign investment despite lower labor costs elsewhere, Perc said.

In the Philippines executives worried that well-placed officials appeared to brush aside accusations that corruption was a problem.

"They argue that those accusing the country of graft don't know what they are talking about, that the country has an 'independent ombudsman' who is doing an excellent job of fighting corruption, and that corruption is not really a big problem. This is not a line of argument that is bought by regional managers of multinationals and banks," Perc said.

In Thailand corruption seemed to be intensifying in some ways, they said, even though direct bribes, concessions and favors might be less of a problem now.

"Instead the authorities change laws and regulations and practices, replacing them with new arrangements that benefit certain large industries and businesses, many of which happen to have close links with influential politicians," the consultancy said.

Although the survey showed the Philippines and Thailand as the only two countries in the region where foreign investors perceive corruption has increased, Perc noted that investors were willing to overlook Thailand's corruption but not in the Philippines.

Thailand was still attracting large amounts of foreign investments while corruption is a growing deterrent to investment and economic growth in the Philippines, Perc said.

Perc also noted that while Vietnam shared the Philippines' poor reputation in fighting corruption, "it has not stopped Vietnam from posting one of the most rapid rates of economic growth in the region."

"To the extent that respondents said corruption is a deterrent to investment and business growth in the countries, it probably means that the countries would have gotten even more foreign direct investments and grown even faster than they have had they had a better check on corruption."

In Indonesia, graft is seen a major drawback for foreign investors but they are encouraged by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's drive to stamp out corruption, the survey showed.

"The legal system in that country remains highly suspect, but President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has stepped up the fight against graft," Perc said. *Reuters, AFP and Gil Cabacungan*

Bolante back; Senate readies subpoena

By Nikko Dizon
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

JOCELYN "JOC JOC" BOLANTE, the former Agriculture undersecretary linked to the disbursement of the P728-million fertilizer fund, slipped back into the country yesterday from Los Angeles, California, reliable sources at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport said.

The sources said Bolante was on Philippine Airlines flight PR 103 which arrived at 5:57 a.m.

Bolante left for the United States on Oct. 26, hours ahead of a Senate committee on agriculture inquiry into allegations the multimillion-peso farmers' fund was distributed to pro-administration lawmakers during the campaign period last year to boost President Macapagal-Arroyo's election chances.

Now that the elusive former official believed to be the central figure in the alleged fertilizer scam is back, the Senate is not losing time getting hold of him to clarify things.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said the Senate committee on agriculture had set a "special hearing" on Monday to hear Bolante's testimony, after he evaded the Senate hearing five times.

The committee was originally set to resume its investigation in January but Bolante's return prompted Magsaysay to consider a hearing on Monday.

"We'll have a hearing just to give him a chance to explain his role in this multimillion-peso issue on Monday afternoon. He'll be the only resource person to show how important his role was in this issue," Magsaysay said in a phone interview.

Bolante was the agriculture official said to be responsible for allocating and distributing the funds for the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani program. The program was supposed to distribute fertilizer and other farm inputs to farmers through congressmen and other government officials.

ANOTHER SNAFU

Navy command turnover aborted

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

FOR THE SECOND TIME IN three months, Malacañang unceremoniously aborted the turnover ceremonies for a top military position yesterday, once more prompting speculation of last-minute lobbying.

Vice Admiral Mateo Mayuga, the Armed Forces Inspector General, was all set to take over from outgoing Navy chief Vice Admiral Ernesto de Leon at 2 p.m. yesterday when the ceremony was cancelled at the last minute, subjecting him to the same embarrassment suffered by Lt. Gen. Samuel Bagasin, the AFP Deputy Chief of Staff, last September.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters on Sunday that Mayuga had been appointed as Navy chief, an announcement later repeated by a Navy spokesman. Mayuga himself confirmed his appointment and, in interviews with reporters on Sunday, spoke about some of the plans and programs which he said he had outlined in his acceptance speech.

But at 9 a.m. yesterday De Leon sent word through a spokesman that the turnover ceremony set at the Navy headquarters on Roxas Blvd. had been postponed "indefinitely."

Malacañang itself said late yesterday afternoon that the President had not yet decided whom to appoint as the next Philippine Navy chief.

"We made a clarification and we sent out the notice that the President has not signed any appointment," said Bunye, who insisted that the Palace had been consistent in saying that the President had not yet signed any appointment papers.

Bunye said the leadership void in the Navy would be "resolved soon." He did not explain why the President was taking too long.

Despite the snafu, Bunye said Mayuga should not be discouraged. "I believe the admiral is a professional who will not let this incident get in the way of performing his job," Bunye said.

De Leon, who had filed for terminal leave starting Dec. 5, remains the Navy chief in the meantime.

The souvenir programs naming Mayuga as the new Navy chief were hastily hidden away yesterday morning along with the banners and other paraphernalia for the turnover ceremony.

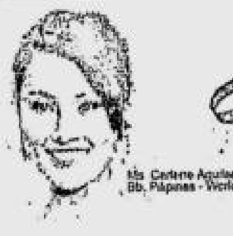
Neither De Leon nor Mayuga would take calls yesterday. AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga, who was supposed to preside over the turnover, also did not answer calls. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and TJ Burgonio*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Tuesday, December 6, 2005

Miss World
55TH MISS WORLD 2005
SANYA CHINA
SA SABADO NA! 9:30 PM



Ms. Carlene Aguilar Bb. Pilipinas - World

ABC Iba Tayo!

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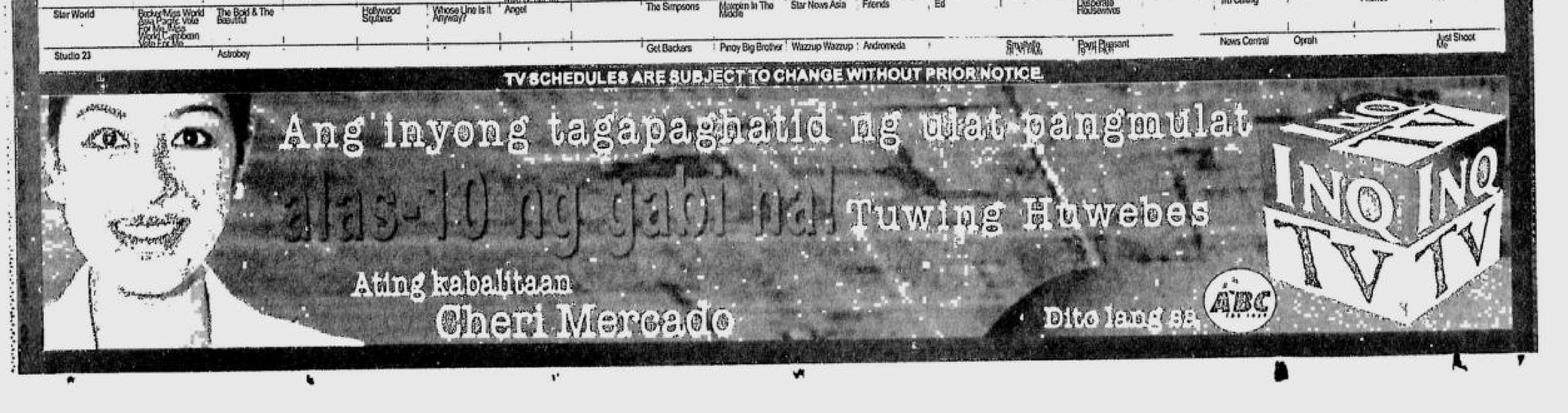
2. Key in CTC TV and send to 2333 for Globe and to 225 for Smart. PhP2.50 per SMS sent.

Channel	Programs
ABC 5	Sentro 2005 South East Asian Games Big News 2005 South East Asian Games
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema Little Amy Mr. Bean Naruto Amazing Twins Meteor Garden Season 2 TV Patrol World Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit Kampanerang Kuba Panday Vietnam Rose Pinoy Big Brother Bora Insider
AXN	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4) CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4) The 4400 Amazon The Outer Limits (Season IV) The Amazing Race Family Edition Worlds Apart House Las Vegas
Cartoon Network	Yogi Bear Show The All New Popeye Show Tom & Jerry Show Baby Looney Tunes Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends Codename Kids Next Door Duck Dodgers Battle B-Daman Machine Robo-Rescue Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends Johnny Bravo Courage The Cowardly Dog Mike, Lu & Og Time Squad Codename Kids Next Door Duck Dodgers
Cinema One	Estela Mondragon Ang Bukas Ay Akin Anghel Sa Lupa Gagamboy La Vida Rosa
Cinemax	Little Women (3:45 PM) Mind Of The Crime (5:45 PM) Sliver (7:15 PM) Two Weeks Notice Single White Female
CNN	Business International World News World Sport Larry King Live Business International World News World Sport World News Asia World News World Sport World News Asia Your World Today
Discovery Channel	Wild Science Rides Human Discovery Wild Discovery
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series Totally Spies Art Attack/Unitalkative Bunny Mickey Mouse and Friends Lilo & Stitch Sabrina, The Animated Series Totally Spies Kim Possible Mr. Bean, The Animated Series That's So Raven Wonderful World Of Disney Suite Life Of Zack And Cody Phil Of The Future Mickey Mouse and Friends Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers Wonderful World Of Disney
ESPN	Acc / Big Ten Chall. Purdue Vs Florida St. Table Tennis '05 Killerspin Boxing Series Friday Night Fights Sportscenter Asia Table Tennis '05 Killerspin Acc / Big Ten Chall. Duke Vs Indiana X-Games Files '04 Sportscenter Asia
ETC	Good Morning Miami Knock First 1 Hr. Edited Version Of Today Show Elimidate Change of Heart Seinfeld Ambush Makeover JKX Simple Life One Tree Hill For Love Or Money Entertainment Tonight The Insider The Tonight Show With Jay Leno
EWTN	Catholic Social Teaching Angelus (3:15 PM) ABCatholic Angel Force Angels Of God Rosary With Mother Angelica The Gospel Of John EWTN Gallery Lord, Have Mercy The Journey Home Encore Council Of Faith Good Or Evil, Who Decides? Daily Mass (SAP) Live Angelus (10:15 PM) Rome Reports Web Of Faith
Fox News	Hannity & Colmes On The Record With Greta Van Susteren The O'Reilly Factor Your World With Neil Cavuto Fox & Friends Fox News Live
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako Now and Forever Date With Tiffany Dragonball Z Slam Dunk Frog Prince 24 Oras Extra Challenge Sugo Encantadia Starstruck 3 Jewel In The Palace Bahay Mo Ba 'To? Saksi
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched IV Mcleod's Daughters IV HCA, The Fairytaler Sesame Street Who's The Boss Bewitched IV The Nanny III Family Law II Mcleod's Daughters IV Cactus Kids Five Days To Midnight Family Law II (11:25 PM)
HBO	Hooper Taking Lives (5:15 PM) Rome Ep 01: The Stolen Eagle Rome Ep 02: How Titus Pullo Brought Down The Republic Rome Ep 03: An Owl In A Thornbush Rome Ep 04: Stealing From Saturn The Italian Job
IBC 13	IBC Express Balita Sea Games
JackTV	Family Guy Just For Laughs (Gags) Beat The Geeks WWE Bottomline WWE Afterburn X-Play Banzai Mad TV Trigger Happy TV Primetime Glick South Park The Daily Show With Jon Stewart Ren & Stimpy Adult Party Cartoon Family Guy Wwe Heat
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens The Fixl Mission Organization Carol Duvall Molto Mario Hot Off The Grill Good Eats Extreme Cuisine Unwrapped Passion For Dessert Second Look Look For Less Life & Style Who's Wedding Is It Anyway? Road & Track Back To Basics
MTV Philippines	MTV Screen Spring Break Diyes Punk'D Pop Inc MTV Hits MTV Hits Get Spotted TRL Advance Warning Pimp My Ride MTV Hits VH1 Video Collections
MYX	Rock MYX My MYX Mellow MYX Urban MYX Take 5 MYX Versions Star MYX MYXILOG Pop MYX MYX Daily Top Ten Top Of The Pops MYX News My MYX MYX Backtrax OPM MYX
National Geographic	7/7 Attack On London The Airshow Miracle Is It Real? Top 5 Wow! About Asia Nat'l Geographic Specials Seconds From Disaster Inside 911
NBN	New Life TV Shopping Teledyaryo Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya? Sea Games Teledyaryo Pilipinas Ngayon Na Bantay OCW With Susan K.
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues/ What Planet Are You From Rugrats Hey Arnold! My Life As A Teenage Robot/ Right On Top The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron SpongeBob SquarePants Fairly Odd Parents All That Naturally Sadie Romeo Drake & Josh The Fairly Odd Parents All Grown Up As Told By Ginger Rocket Power Chalkzone The Wild Thornberrys The Angry Beavers The Brothers Garcia
PBO	Mahirap Maging Pogi [illegible] Night Of The Champions Laging Naroon Ka Masamang Damo
Qtv	Endless Christmas (Navidad Sin Fin) Manana (Sin Pasado Condenado) Cabecita MMS (My Music Station) Moms Golden Bowl Star Laugh To Laugh Ang Kulit My Guardian Baby All In News On Q Sana'y Muling Makapiling Groupee TV
RPN 9	TV Shopping Defenders Of The Earth Hey Arnold! Wild Thornberries Sponge Bob As Told By Ginger Entertainment Tonight The Insider The Real Gilligan's Island The Cut Paradise Hotel Newswatch Now Tuesday Night Treat
SBN 21	New Life TV Shop Winner TV Shopping Oras Ng Himala Oras ng Kaligtasan Music Video Buhay Pinoy
Solar Sports	FIVB World Champ Cup Women's Event, POL vs BRA 2005 US Open 9-Ball C'ship GWS WTA Int'l. Open 2005 China Sportsdesk NBA Game Spurs @ Magic NBA Inside Stuff
Sports Plus	NFL 2005 New York Jets @ New England Ultimate Fighting Championship Party Poker.com World Open 2005
Star Movies	The Ticket The Singing Detective Harley Davidson & The Marlboro Man (5:15 PM) Vertical Limit (6:55 PM) Edward Scissorhands The Fan (10:45 PM)
Star World	Rocker/Miss World Asia Pacific Vote For Ms. Miss World Caribbean Vote For Ms. The Bold & The Beautiful Hollywood Squares Whose Line Is It Anyway? Angel The Simpsons Malcolm In The Middle Star News Asia Friends Ed Desperate Housewives Tru Calling Friends Ed
Studio 23	Astroboy Get Backers Pinoy Big Brother Wazzup Wazzup Andromeda Smallville (9:11 PM) Point Pleasant (9:11 PM) News Central Oprah Just Shoot Me

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

Sandigan raps prosecution, defense lawyers in Erap trial

By Nelson F. Flores

BOTH PROSECUTION AND DEFENSE lawyers in the plunder trial of former President Joseph Estrada have been warned from making press statements that would exert pressure or diminish the integrity of the anti-graft court.

The Sandiganbayan Special Division gave the warning after Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio and Estrada's lawyers—former Manila Prosecutor Jose Flaminiano and ex-Senator Rene Saguisag—traded barbs for several minutes in open court over the alleged offensive language used in their motions and media interviews.

Presiding Justice and Special Division Chair Teresita de Castro said the court had consistently ignored the derogatory statements made by prosecution and members of the defense panel because it did not want to be distracted from the case.

The court, however, took exception to Villa-Ignacio's statements to media that tend to "pressure the court."

Villa-Ignacio threatened to resign should a motion filed by defense lawyers seeking cognizance for the former president was approved by the court. He also claimed that members of Ateneo High School Class of 1955 would be committing the crime of bribery should they insist on paying for the expenses of Estrada's attendance to their golden jubilee celebration concert in Pasig City.

"You (lawyers) should show an image [where you] respect each other," De Castro said.

In response, Villa-Ignacio apologized and said his remarks were not meant to pressure the court.

"My statements are directed against third parties seeking cognizance for Estrada," he told reporters after yesterday's court proceeding.

In the past month, Estrada's lawyers have intensified their legal actions seeking a modification in his custodial arrangement, which includes his possible release on cognizance to a person of known integrity.

Saguisag said he recently filed a motion on ground rules for press interviews. He cited the Code of Professional Responsibility which said: "A lawyer shall not make public statements in the media regarding a pending case tending to arouse public opinion for or against a party."

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ConCom set to endorse parliamentary form of gov't

By Norman Bordadora

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION (ConCom) on Charter change is expected this afternoon to adopt a recommendation mandating a shift to a parliamentary form of government in a new Constitution, a commission official told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Rene Azurin, a professor at the University of the Philippines Graduate School of Business and cochair of the ConCom committee on the form of government, said an overwhelming majority of commission members would recommend the shift to a parliamentary from the presidential form, and there was nothing opponents of the change could do about it.

"There's nothing more we can do. All we can do right now is vent our opposition in the media and hope the public is enlightened when they ratify the new constitution in a plebiscite," Azurin said in an interview.

Azurin and only six other ConCom members are opposed to the idea of changing the system of government, saying the parliamentary form would give politicians too much power.

"You give them both legislative and executive powers. They will have the power to make the policies and then implement them," Azurin said.

"The national budget will become a huge pork barrel. Budget deliberations will just be partitioning the funds to determine who gets how much," he added.

Azurin said that under a parliamentary system, there is no check and balance with the Prime Minister and his Cabinet except through the judiciary.

"(But) that assumes one can actually document and prove wrongdoing. If we are now disturbed by the way politicos are wielding limited powers, what should we imagine will happen after they've been given virtually unlimited powers?" Azurin said.

"And if even the proponents of the parliamentary form now attribute many of the nation's problems to politicos, why in heaven's name would they propose a solution that gives even more power to politicos? If this isn't completely illogical, it is at least terribly naïve," he said.

Azurin said the advocates of the shift in system argue that it is our form of government that is holding us back and preventing us from keeping economic pace with our neighbors.

"They argue the legislative gridlock built into the presidential system is the main problem and that eliminating this—which the fusion into a single body of the executive and legislative branches will do—will speed up our economic growth and development," Azurin said.

"These arguments are so weak it is hard to believe that even those making them actually believe what they are saying. For every country with a parliamentary government that is racing ahead of us economically, one can cite a country with a presidential system that is doing as well or better," he said.

Azurin said that in Asia, while Malaysia and Thailand with their parliamentary systems may be performing better than we are, South Korea and Taiwan are doing much better economically with their presidential systems.

"The economic performance of a country is a function of its economic policies, resource endowments and environmental conditions, not its form of government. China, an economic racehorse, is not even a democracy," Azurin pointed out.

Jose Abueva, ConCom chair, expressed confidence the commission will be able to finalize its recommendations for Charter change by its deadline of Dec. 15.

"We've been in close coordination with Speaker Jose de Venecia and the House majority. They have (assured us) they will use our proposals and consider the findings of our consultations," Abueva said.

The House voted overwhelmingly last week to form itself into a constituent assembly to make changes to the 1987 Constitution. The Senate's concurrence, which it appears reluctant to give, is necessary to make the constituent assembly a reality.

OCAMPO

PALPARAN

Probe Palparan, Satur urges Ombudsman

BAYAN MUNA PARTY-LIST REP. SATUR Ocampo yesterday asked the Ombudsman to investigate Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr., commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija, for human rights violations.

Ocampo, deputy minority leader in the House of Representatives and leader of its independent bloc, also asked the Ombudsman to immediately suspend Palparan from his post pending resolution of the complaint.

He said Palparan's role in political assassinations, abductions, arson and human rights violations wherever he had been assigned should be closely looked into.

Ocampo, who is Bayan Muna president, said the complaint clearly should block Palparan's promotion which is pending in the Commission on Appointments.

"Palparan does not deserve another day in the military. His idea of peace is the grave. For him, the answer to legitimate dissent is to neutralize and wipe out unarmed civilian activists off the face of the earth. In my view, the Ombudsman's office should be able to arrive at this conclusion if it undertakes a swift and fair investigation," Ocampo said.

Aside from Ocampo, representatives from other party-list organizations—Anakpawis and the Gabriela Women's Party—have long opposed Palparan's promotion.

They blamed Palparan for the series of killings of leftist leaders in the Visayas and northern and southern Luzon.

Palparan has denied all the allegations against him. *Nelson F. Flores*

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CALLING ALL GRADUATES OF THE UNIVERsity of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center (UERMMMC). You are invited to the 35th alumni homecoming on Dec. 14-17, 2005. The honorees this year are the silver jubilarians of Class 1980. The grand fellowship night will be held on Dec. 16, 2005, 6 p.m., at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Makati City.

For details, call the secretariat at tel. nos. 7160771, or 09206748830.

COPW's Message to Congress:
AMEND EPIRA NOW

Consumer & Oil Price Watch (COPW) appeals to Congress to immediately approve amendments to the EPIRA (Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001) or RA 9136.

These amendments were proposed by Senate sub-committee Chairman on Energy, Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, in Senate Bill 1929 and in corresponding bills by Senators Edgardo Angara (SB 1062) and Jinggoy Estrada (SB 998).

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Open access or free competition will bring down prices - of electricity and industrial & consumer goods - since power is a major cost in producing goods. If electricity costs go down, the general public will benefit immensely.

Why we do NOT have Open Access now
EPIRA is defective

RA 9136 called for retail competition and open access not later than three years from the effectivity of the law in July 2001. However, the law imposed conditions:

- Privatization of 70% of the total generating capacity of the government-owned NPC and transfer of the management and control of at least 70% of the total energy output under contract with NPC to the IPP Administrators. *Today, ONLY 16.7% of NPC-IPP Plants & NPC-owned plants have been sold to the private sector.*
- The Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM), a centralized spot market for sellers and buyers to trade electricity as a commodity, must be fully operational in two years before open access starts. *Today, the WESM is on Trial Operations and will be fully operational in July 2006 at the earliest. This means that OPEN ACCESS can ONLY take place in 2009.*

What to do then:
Amendments will remedy the defects of EPIRA. COPW supports amendments proposed by Senator Enrile in SB 1929, as follows:
- Reducing the required privatization of NPC assets from 70% to 50%.
- Installing a truly independent Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), one not subject to political pressures.
- Requiring all hearings of the ERC to be open to all and that witnesses or participants must testify under oath.

Clearly, EPIRA should be amended NOW
In order to reduce electricity cost immediately - to residential users in villages and subdivisions, and to commercial and industrial enterprises who produce the bulk of consumer goods. In order to benefit the people to whom our Senators and Congressmen are sworn to serve.

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Local and Foreign investors are concerned with the:
- *Unpredictable political situation of the country.*
- *Judicial intrusion on contracts approved by the ERC.*
- *Major players are reluctant to participate in the bidding of power projects unless the process is FAIR and TRANSPARENT.*

COPW WILL ASSIST:
- In order to address the concerns mentioned above and to achieve the required 50% privatization of NPC assets ASAP before Open Access and Retail Competition can take place, COPW will meet with the ERC, DOE, PSALM, NPC, WESM & TRANSCO officials.
- COPW will also work closely with the major foreign companies and local investors previously interested in investing in TRANSCO who have backed out and will endeavor to encourage them to reconsider.

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'ROADBLOCK TO PEACE TALKS'

Reds hit EU for putting them on terror list

LOCAL COMMUNIST REBELS YESTERDAY denounced the European Union for blacklisting them as a terrorist group, saying this would hamper possible peace talks and increase the repression of their followers.

The National Democratic Front (NDF), the international representative of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and their guerrilla arm, the New People's Army (NPA), also accused the EU of pandering to the United States.

Both the United States, the main ally of the Philippines, and the EU have put the communists on their lists of "international terrorist organizations," hampering the flow of funds to the insurgents from their sympathizers abroad.

In a statement issued in Manila, the NDF said that the guerrilla movement had "never engaged in any transnational or cross-border act of violence upon its adversaries."

The rebels also said the EU listing had a particularly adverse effect on the founder of the communist movement, Jose Maria Sison, who is living in self-exile in the Netherlands.

The listing "subjects (Sison) to mental torture, inhuman and degrading treatment" as well as "punitive sanctions ... including the termination of the essential means to his human existence," the NDF said.

This was in apparent reference to the monetary support Sison had been receiving from sympathetic groups which was now cut off due to the blacklisting.

The NDF also said that the terrorism label was "contributing to the paralysis" of the communists' peace negotiations with the government while emboldening security forces to commit "human rights violations."

The CPP has waged a 36-year-long Maoist campaign to seize power in the country, including attacks on government forces and on rural businesses that refuse to pay their extortion demands.

In late November, an NPA spokesman warned that the rebels were going to step up their attacks in the coming weeks.

Peace talks between government and the communists ground to a halt last year after the rebels demanded the government campaign to have them removed from the EU and US terror blacklists. *AFP*

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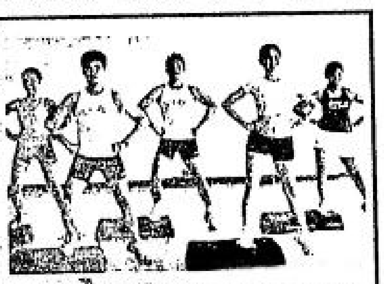

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RP athletes lauded for winning crown

By Christian V. Esguerra and Philip C. Tubeza

PHILIPPINE LEADERS YESTERDAY lauded Filipino athletes for winning the country's first Southeast Asian Games championship, but administration critics said their feat was tarnished by Thai charges of cheating and blamed President Macapagal-Arroyo for the accusations.

"The sins of parents have a way of getting transmitted to their children," said Archbishop Oscar Cruz, who had accused the First Family of receiving illegal gambling payoffs.

Rep. Joey Salceda, an administration ally, described as a "hollow" victory the Philippines topping the medal race in the 11-nation biennial event and insisted that Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Sinawatra make a public apology for insinuating the games were fixed.

"Without an apology, Congress must investigate this government for its reluctance, bordering on ineptitude, in defending our national dignity. In the eyes of history, this is a gross betrayal of our racial pride, an offense more impeachable," he said.

In a statement issued hours earlier, Ms Arroyo congratulated the Filipino athletes. She said that for once, Filipinos had set aside their differences and showed the world "that we can move as one and go for gold with incomparable unity and teamwork."

"No dreams are too distant to achieve if we prepare well, work hard and close ranks," the 58-year-old President said.

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal said the Philippine triumph was expected. "If you're on your own turf, you play well," he said. "We didn't cheat."

Archbishop Cruz said the Thai charges might have been trained on Ms Arroyo, who has been accused of manipulating last year's presidential election—a claim she has vehemently denied.

The Filipino athletes trained well, said Cruz. "They gave up much. They did their best. They won medals," said the Dagupan-Lingayen prelate.

Jokes because of GMA

"Yet all these are undermined by disturbing comments and painful jokes. And all these are not because of them but on account of their President."

Cruz said the "presidential liability was appended to the Filipino athletes" the same way that "the sins of parents have a way of getting transmitted to their children."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that at a Cabinet meeting yesterday, officials of the Commission on Higher Education announced that state colleges and universities were ready to extend scholarship grants to athletes "of school age."

"If we can do this in the area of sports, I think we also can pull through in other endeavors, especially in political and economic reforms," Bunye said.

Disneyland tour?

Asked about reports that First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo planned to take the athletes to Hong Kong Disneyland, Bunye surmised that this would be courtesy of the private sector.

Administration congressmen batted for increased government spending in sports, noting that the budget of the Philippine Sports Commission was to be cut from P107 million in 2005 to P27 million in 2006.

"This is an insult," said Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, a trustee of the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee. "We should reward all our athletes."

Davao Oriental Rep. Joel Mayo Almario, chair of the House committee on games and amusements, said Congress should consider giving deserving athletes higher allowances and allocating more funds to upgrade sports facilities and training programs.

"This will not only boost the country's sports program and the people's overall fitness but unify the nation in a worthwhile endeavor," he said.

Targeting more medals

Almario said the country should target more medals in the Olympics and Asian Games by choosing 10 sporting events with the best chances for gold and giving full backing to the athletes competing in them.

Despite the Thai criticism of the games, the Philippine government yesterday assured the Thai monarchy of the "enduring friendship" between Manila and Bangkok.

Acting Foreign Secretary Edsel Custodio yesterday conveyed Ms Arroyo's greetings to King Bhumibol Adulyadej on his 78th birthday, in a diplomatic toast held at the Dusit Hotel in Makati City. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Norman Bordadora and Volt Contreras*

RP athletes wrap up smashing campaign

From page A1

The 21-year-old Molina, a mainstay of the University of California-Berkeley NCAA team, emerged the most bemedalled Filipino with three individual golds and a silver and a bronze in the team events.

3 golds, too

The 5-foot-1 Perez, who'll be turning 20 on Saturday, also snared three golds.

Though the athletics contingent was able to raise their output from eight to nine, they still fell one gold shy of meeting their target of 10 golds out of 45 staked in the event.

Beefed up by 2004 world pool champion Alex Pagulayan, who was good for three golds, and Rubilen Amit, who pocketed two, the Filipino cue artists accounted for eight golds and cut short Vietnam's reign in billiards and snooker.

Reaping the benefits of foreign exposure, the Filipino boxers emerged overall champions in the event held in Bacolod City with eight golds, including four from the distaff side, as against the Thais' five golds.

While Thailand harped on the Philippine organizers allegedly giving priority to winning medals over camaraderie, Filipino fight fans in Bacolod City felt otherwise.

'Biased scoring'

The final middleweight bout between Filipino Reynaldo Galido and Athens bronze medalist Suriya Prasathipimae had to be stopped after the first round with the Thai declared the winner after fans started throwing coins and plastic bottles into the ring because of what they perceived to be biased scoring.

Rower Benjamin Tolentino, reducing his weight by more than 20 pounds, also fished out three golds at the La Mesa Dam, where the traditional boat races were also held.

With world-ranked Cecil Mamiit, Eric Taino and US-trained Riza Zalameda at the helm, the Filipino tennis players also showed their stuff by clinching the men's singles, the men's team and the mixed doubles titles at the Rizal Memorial Tennis center.

Living up to their lofty billing, the Filipino bowlers struck for four golds through Liza Clutario and SEAG rookie Markwin Tee in the men's and women's masters and Ma. Cecilia Yap in the women's singles and CJ Suarez and Ernesto Gatchalian in the men's doubles.

Hammer thrower Arneil Ferreria was the lone Filipino SEAG record-breaker when he cleared 60.47 meters.

Juvic Pagunsan clinched the individual golf title and combined with Jay Bayron, Michael Bibat and Marvin Dumandan to give the Philippines the men's team crown.

Judoka John Baylon showed that he's still the region's best at 41 years old by topping the 81-kg division. It was Baylon's seventh straight SEAG title.

Expectedly, the Philippine team topped the baseball competition and so did the RP Blu Boys and RP Blu Girls in softball held at the Rosario Sports Arena in Pasig.

There were disappointments, of course.

For the first time, the Filipino woodpushers got shut out of a gold medal at the Tagaytay International Convention Center, where they targeted five golds.

The RP riders, on the other hand, could only snare two golds out of a projected six.

Shining moments

World-class bets also made their mark in the nine-day Games.

Singapore's legendary Joscelin Yeo won six gold medals at the Trace Aquatics Center in Los Baños, Laguna, to boost her gold haul to a record 40 in a career spanning seven SEA Games. Yeo matched her output in Vietnam, where she was named top athlete of the Games.

Olympic and world champion Pawina Thongsuk of Thailand marked her return to the 69-kilogram weightlifting class with a gold medal, her third international title in separate weight classes.

Athens silver medalist Worapoj Petchkoom and former world champion Somjit Jongjohor, both of Thailand, topped their respective divisions at the expense of Filipino rivals in the boxing finals.

Vietnam foiled in soccer

Vietnam's bid for the Games' soccer title was again foiled by Thailand, 3-0, Sunday night.

The Filipino men and women booters showed improvement, luring thousands of fans to both the Panaad Sports Complex in Bacolod and the Marikina Sports Center pitch.

Indonesia, bolstered by the presence of defending Olympic and world singles champion Taufik Hidayat, ruled the badminton competition, sweeping the men's and women's singles, men's doubles and mixed doubles.

While there were no Asian Games or Olympic records broken, some meet standards in swimming and track and field were raised.

The Filipino athletes, of course, emerged the biggest winners of all.

We have rediscovered best in Filipino—GMA

From page A1

the Games closed.

Amid spectacular fireworks that lit the night sky and a crowd enveloped in an atmosphere of smiles, the nine-day regional competition came to an emotional close when the federation flag was lowered.

An orchestral rendition of the Games' theme song, "We're All Just One," was played as the Sacred Fire was extinguished.

As the host nation, the Philippines was hit by criticisms for supposedly poor organization and alleged biased officiating. A diplomatic row even brewed momentarily when Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra questioned the results of several events.

But yesterday, no one seemed to mind anymore as soon as the ceremonies began with an impressive drill by cadets of the Philippine National Police Academy.

"The Philippines did not prepare a fancy feast but an austere get-together that fortifies the brotherhood shared for many years through athletic competitions," said Jose Cojuango, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee and chief executive officer of the Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee.

With each of the 11 nations capturing honors and finding their own places on the podium, Cojuangco congratulated them and hoped that the Philippines had "performed according to expectations."

In a show of unity, the athletes marched into the field en masse. The heads of mission later lit the Southeast Asian flames in front of their flags on stage.

But Ms Arroyo and local sports officials clearly beamed at the 400-strong Philippine contingent.

"I want our athletes to enjoy this moment," said Cojuangco. "They worked so hard for this. I don't want them to enjoy only one or two minutes when they get their medals and accolades. I want the athletes to go around as many areas as possible and the people tp really give them a good hand."

Just like the opening ceremonies, it was another night filled with wondrous music and a colorful suite of festival dances.

The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale opened the rites with the national anthem. The Bayanihan Dance Company later joined them on stage as they performed a medley of Southeast Asian songs.

After the Games' flag was lowered and the flames extinguished, the region's diplomats and top sports officials witnessed the turnover rites to the next host country, Thailand.

Thailand's national anthem was played as cadets hoisted the flag of the 2007 host, followed by Thai artists performing a spirited fusion of lights and music.

WELCOME TO
THAILAND
24 SEA GAMES 2007

NEXT EPISODE: Bancha Khamthong cheers for his home country, Thailand, during the closing ceremonies of the Southeast Asian Games at the Panaad Sports Complex in Bacolod City. REM ZAMORA

Athletes representing each country also delivered a brief testimonial, mostly highlighting the unity and brotherhood forged during the Games.

Among the stirring musical productions was the performance of artist Jed Madela, who sang "Ako Ay Pilipino" as a tribute to all Filipino achievers.

The musical party continued late in the night, with the delegates relishing the experience as they return back home starting today.

"It has been very hard, very difficult," said Cojuangco of the country's hosting job. "But our athletes delivered in every sport. I think that was what everyone was looking forward to."

Nida's lawyer questions filing of murder charges

From page A1

Gen. Galileo Kintanar as an accessory to the crime.

The findings were announced yesterday by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Blanca's lawyer, former Justice Harriet Demetriou, protested the DOJ panel's recommendation, insisting that Kintanar should be charged as a principal and not as an accomplice or accessory.

"Kintanar provided all the men to kill Nida Blanca," Demetriou said, accusing the panel of treating the former military official with "kid gloves."

"We're here at the justice department, but what we're seeing is a travesty of justice," she told reporters following Gonzalez's press briefing.

Reconsideration

With Blanca's daughter Kaye Torres by her side, Demetriou said she was filing a motion for reconsideration and asked that Gonzalez create another council to review the findings of Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard D. Fadullon's panel.

Fadullon defended his panel's findings, saying its evidence could only support the charge of being an accessory against Kintanar. "Allegation by itself is not evidence," he said.

The DOJ panel also cleared Blanca's relative—Bernardita "Ditas" S. de la Paz—of the crime, noting that her purchase of a plane ticket for suspect Rod Lawrence Strunk to go to the United States could not serve as evidence to indict her.

Martinez, a businessman, remains missing. De la Paz was Blanca's personal aide and confidential secretary while Kintanar is the former head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

3 new witnesses

The findings of the DOJ panel were based mostly on testimonies of three new witnesses, namely, Andrada Dalandas, Fedelyn Canonio and Rannie Francisco.

So far, only Philip Medel, the confessed killer of Blanca, and her American husband Strunk have been charged with the crime. Strunk left for the United States, and later thwarted government efforts to extradite him.

Witness Dalandas, a hospitality girl who was at the crime scene, identified Martinez as one of those who emerged from a van in the early morning of Nov. 7, 2001, carrying the body of Blanca.

"The panel finds the clear evidence against him (Martinez) more than sufficient to establish probable cause as to his guilt," said the DOJ panel.

No show

Martinez failed to show up at the preliminary investigation and did not submit any counter-affidavit in his defense.

Witness Canonio admitted bringing Dalandas to the Atlanta Center that day.

Canonio and Francisco said they saw De la Paz with Blanca—who was still alive—leave the Movie Television Rating and Classification Board office at the Atlanta Centre on Nov. 6, 2001.

"Her participation to such an extent immediately before the execution of the crime makes her an accomplice as it is not far-fetched that at that time she had some knowledge of the criminal intention of respondent Martinez and company," according to the Fadullon panel.

'Damage control'

With regard to Kintanar, the panel said several witnesses implicated him in the crime and most of them confirmed his closeness to Medel and Strunk.

Security guard Alfredo Rodriguez, for one, claimed that Kintanar had asked him and one Andrino Sayas to conduct a surveillance of Blanca.

Witness Pedro Pates, a former soldier, also testified that he saw and met Medel at Kintanar's house on Oct. 21, 2001. He later testified overhearing a certain Colonel Litrondo and Kintanar talk about the need for "effective damage control" after Medel's surrender was reported in the media.

"The panel thus finds respondent Kintanar probably guilty as accessory to the crime charged as the acts he committed indicate an attempt to cover up for his knowledge of the crime committed … ," the Fadullon panel said.

Still dying to win the lotto? Read on

From page A1

Years of blue-collar struggle and ramshackle apartment life gave way almost overnight to limitless leisure, big houses and lavish toys.

Metcalf bought a Mount Vernon-like estate in southern Kentucky, stocking it with horses and vintage cars.

Merida bought a Mercedes-Benz and a modernistic mansion overlooking the Ohio River, surrounding herself with stray cats.

But trouble came almost as fast. And though there have been many stories of lottery winners turning to drugs or alcohol and of lottery fortunes turning to dust, the tale of Metcalf and Merida stands out as a striking example of good luck—the kind most people only dream about—rapidly turning fatally bad.

Troubles

The first wife of Metcalf sued him for $31,000 in unpaid child support, a former girlfriend wheedled $500,000 out of him while he was drunk, and alcoholism increasingly paralyzed him.

The boyfriend of Merida died of drug overdose in her hilltop house, a brother began harassing her, and neighbors came to believe her once welcoming home had turned into a drug den.

Though Metcalf and Merida were divorced by 2001, it was as if their lives as rich people had taken on an eerie symmetry. So did their deaths.

In 2003, just three years after cashing in his winning ticket, Metcalf died of complications relating to alcoholism at the age of 45.

On the day before Thanksgiving, the partly decomposed body of Merida was found in her bed. Authorities said they have found no evidence of foul play and are looking into the possibility of drug overdose. She was 51.

Unbelievable

Merida's death remains under investigation, and large parts of both her and Metcalf's lives remain wrapped in mystery. But some friends and relatives said they thought the moral of the couple's stories was clear.

"Any problems people have, money magnifies it so much, it's unbelievable," said Robert Merida, one of Merida's three brothers.

Metcalf's first wife, Marilyn Collin, said: "If he hadn't won, he would have worked like regular people and maybe had 20 years left. But when you put that kind of money in the hands of somebody with problems, it just helps them kill themselves."

It is unclear how much of Merida's estate remains, but it appears she saved some of it.

That may not have been the case with Metcalf, his daughter said. Six months after his death, his house in Corbin was sold for $657,000, about half of what Metcalf had paid for it. *New York Times News Service*

Corrections

IN THE DEC. 2 issue, a front-page story—"Rowers keep RP medal drive afloat in SEA Games"—misspelled the name of a beach volleyball player. The correct spelling of the player's name is Justin Schnor—not Schonor. The same error appeared in a Sports story on Page A30—"4 RP pairs gain beach volley quarters."

* * *

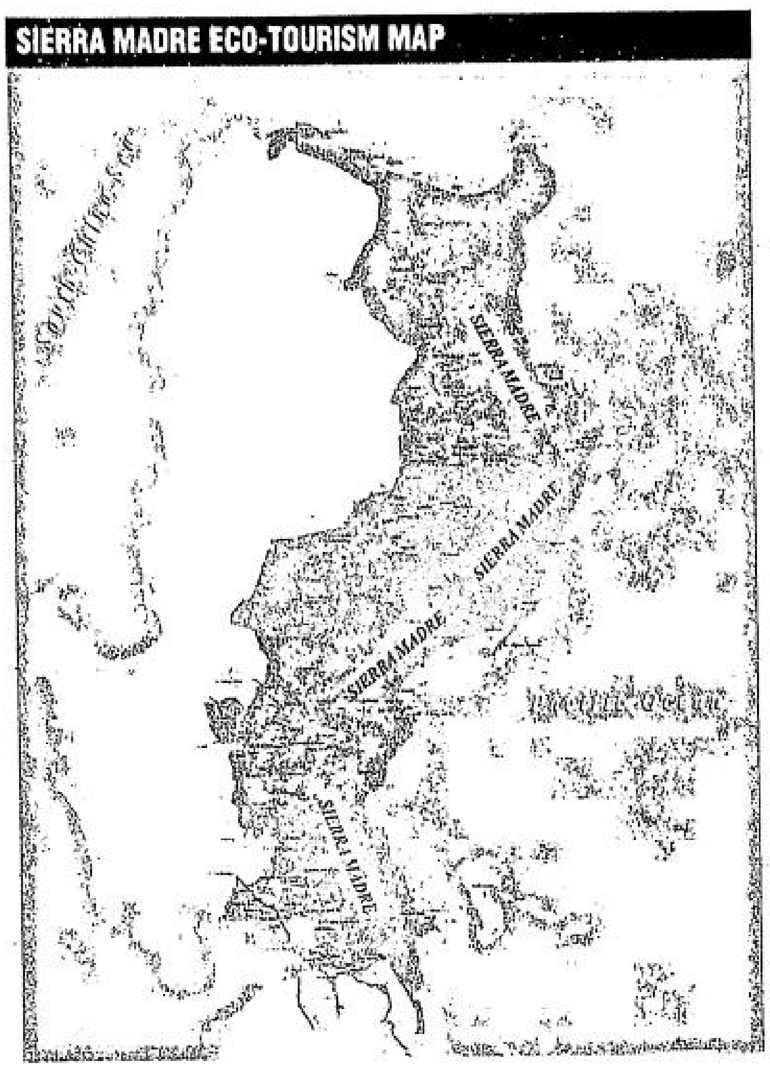
IN THE DEC. 4 issue, a story in the Sports section on Page A28—"Another victory jig for Mamiit"—erroneously stated the roots of tennis player Cecil Mamiit. Mamiit traces his roots to Alaminos, Laguna—not Pangasinan.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

SIERRA MADRE ECO-TOURISM MAP



600-km ecotourism trail under way in the Sierra Madre

By Blanche S. Rivera

IT'S NO YELLOW BRICK ROAD but it has all the trappings of a wonderland.

The Sierra Madre Mountains, the country's longest mountain range and one of the most biologically diverse areas in the world, is being primed to become the top ecohistorical tourism destination in the Philippines.

Environmentalists and local governments launched last week the 600-km Sierra Madre Trail, a unique trek through the 1.4-million ha. mountain range that is home to 3,500 species of plants and the widest variety of birds in Luzon.

Experts from Miriam PEACE (Public Education and Awareness Campaign for the Environment) mapped out a trail from Palaui Island in Cagayan, the northernmost tip of the Sierra Madre, to the UP Land Grant in Quezon, south of Metro Manila, as an ecotourism zone. Miriam PEACE, the outreach arm of Miriam College's Environmental Studies Institute, is convenor and manager of the Sierra Madre Trail (SMT) program.

Appalachian Trail

Inspired by the Appalachian Trail in the United States, the 600-km trail features over 200 destinations in the nine provinces traversed by the Sierra Madre mountains: Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Quirino, Aurora, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna and Quezon.

"This is the first biodiversity corridor trail in the country," Donna Paz Reyes, Miriam PEACE project coordinator, said during the trail's launch at Miriam College's mini-forest Tuesday night.

The Sierra Madre range is one of only three biodiversity corridors in the Philippines identified by Conservation International. The other two are in Palawan and eastern Mindanao.

Bird watching

A biodiversity corridor is a gateway to critical ecosystems that boast of wide varieties of plants and animals, including species found only in the Philippines, as well as species threatened with extinction.

The 600-km trail is punctuated by the best bird-watching points; the areas with the most diverse flower species, and other flora and fauna; and sites for religious rites and other cultural experiences.

"The idea is to have a single ecohistorical tourist destination with focus on its biodiversity corridor," Miriam PEACE said in a statement.

Three-pronged

The Sierra Madre trail is three-pronged. A lowland road trail, a mountain foot trail and a coastal trail.

The lowland trail follows the national highways from Metro Manila: the Maharlika Highway in the north and the Marilaque Highway in the south.

Interesting points on the lowland trail are the Peñablanca Protected ·Landscape, Biak-na-Bato National Park, Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, and the Capisaan Caves in Nueva Vizcaya. To the south are the Pamintinan Caves and Avelon Zoo in Rizal.

One week

Reyes said a week would be "comfortable enough" to take in the wonders of the lowland trail, but to fully experience the nature and culture of the north would require about a month.

The coastal trail features beaches, surfing and dive sites, and towns on Luzon's Pacific coast that can be reached primarily by boat. One such place is the Baler-Palanan trail whose coastline is noted for waves ideal for surfing.

The mountain foot trail is arguably the most challenging of the three options and is expected to be the most popular among foreign trekkers and mountaineers, Reyes said.

Safety issue

Miriam PEACE is still developing a single trail for the mountain foot path and working with local governments to ensure safety both for the locals and local flora and fauna.

The Aguinaldo trail is one tour package that would be offered when the Sierre Madre Trail opens in February. It follows the route of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, the Philippines' first president, when he crossed the Sierre Madre from San Mariano to Palanan to escape pursuing American forces during the Philippine-American War.

Local guides

Reyes said the local governments in areas covered by the foot trail would accredit guides who not only know their way around the forests but are familiar with the biodiversity sites.

The local guides would accompany tourists and educate them on the importance of preserving the Sierra Madre Mountains. The local governments would identify safe areas that could be opened up to tourists.

Environmentalists are promoting ecotourism as a viable development option for the country, which is being marketed by the government as one of the best mining sites in the world.

Population pressure

Population pressure is also taking a toll on the forests. Around 10 million people live in the Sierra Madre, among them the Dumagats, Kalingas, Ibanags, and Bugkalots.

"With the damaging effects of environmental problems, there is a need to unify conservation initiatives... to ensure the harmonious co-existence of people and nature in the long term," Miriam PEACE said.

Reyes admits it's a long way to go for Sierra Madre's caretakers and visitors, but because they are on the right track, the journey can't be that bad.

HOUSE VS SENATE

Pork fights to hold up budget– Villar

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEN. MANUEL VILLAR YESTERDAY warned that deliberations on the P1.056-trillion national budget for 2006 could reach an impasse because of "disguised pork barrels" and predicted that this and other delays would force the government to work under a reenacted 2005 budget during the first three months of next year.

Speaking at the Kapihan sa Maynila forum yesterday, the chair of the Senate committee on finance said the increases in the proposed 2006 budget would likely be subjected to extensive discussion, hampering the budget's passage.

But he added it would be important to scrutinize additional projects in the budget, which include the Kilos Asenso Support Fund and the Kalayaan Barangay Program Fund, since these would be funded by additional taxes collected under the expanded value added tax law.

Some senators had voiced concern earlier over ,the two new funds, which will require a total outlay of P8 billion. They suspected that these were new forms of pork barrel, a known source of kickbacks.

"Some of the projects are good but they would be using VAT earnings," Villar said. "We have to see where the money goes because most of these projects are just disguised pork. We might forget that the primary reason we imposed the VAT is to fix the country's finances. If we are so hot to spend the earnings, we might end up getting back our old financial problems."

The senator said that it was in balancing the use of EVAT funds with the need to pursue fiscal reforms such as closing the budget deficit that he saw a deadlock emerging.

"We need to balance the funding of these projects with our financial needs. That is probably where there would be an impasse between the senate and the lower house," he said.

VILLAR

Villar said it was unrealistic to expect that the budget bill would be forwarded to the Senate in January since it was still being discussed at the House's committee level. February was a more likely date for the bill to reach the Senate, Villar said, adding that the bicameral conference would probably be held in March.

Insular Life's 95th Anniversary Treat for its Policyholders

As our way of saying thank you to all those who have entrusted to Insular Life their future financial security, we offer these anniversary treats:

Guaranteed Issue Offer

From November 1 to December 16, 2005, Insular Life policyholders may apply for an additional insurance coverage without the need for a medical examination. To qualify for the offer, a policyholder must:

a. have an in-force policy that was medically-underwritten as standard and issued from January 1, 2003 up to October 31, 2005; a policyholder whose policy was issued with a standard rating on the basis of his agent's Non Medical Authority will not qualify for this offer.
b. be at least 12 months old but not more than 50 years old as of the effective date of the new policy; and
c. not have undergone any major operation, nor have contracted a serious medical impairment after the last policy was issued.

A qualified policyholder may apply for an additional coverage equal to the face amount of the basic policy issued previously (inclusive of STAR, if any), up to a maximum of P2 million. This is on condition that the additional coverage will not raise the policyholder's over-all coverage with the company (new policy plus existing policies) to more than P50 million. For more information, contact your soliciting agent or call Insular Life's Agency Relations and Services Staff at 771-1818 loc. 5104 and look for Ms. Iris Aman.

CASHandog ng Insular Life, I-Text Mo, Info Mo

Policyholders of Insular Life with in-force policies can text their latest valid contact information to Insular Life and get the chance to win as much as P95,000 in 2 raffle draws on December 2005 and February 2006. To join, text: INSULARLIFE Policy Number/Last Name/Birth Date/Home Phone. Birth Date is in mmddyy format and Home Phone with area code for non-MM numbers. Example: INSULARLIFE A009999991/Flores/021859/063-8669910

Send to 2327 for Globe subscribers and 0917-8902327 for non-Globe subscribers.

Raffle Mechanics

1. An entry will be considered valid only if it follows the prescribed text message format specified above. Each text message sent will cost the sender P1.00.
2. Only one (1) raffle entry will be considered for one (1) valid policy number. For policy number with multiple messages, only the last valid message sent will be considered.
3. Winners will be determined by electronic raffle draw. Only in-force policies at the time of draw will be declared valid winners.
4. There will be two (2) raffle draws : December 2005 and February 2006.
5. Non-winning raffle entries in the December 2005 draw will be included in the February 2006 draw.
6. If a policyholder wins more than once, he/she gets the prize with the higher value.

Names of winners will be published in major newspapers. Winners will be notified through registered mail. Prizes must be claimed within 60 days from the date of notice. For further inquiries, visit any Insular Life branch nationwide, call IL Call Center at 771-1818 local 4424 or log on to: www.insularlife.com.ph.

Ode to 95 with the UP Singing Ambassadors

Believing in the unique talents of the Filipino, Insular Life brings to you a special concert featuring the internationally acclaimed UP Singing Ambassadors on December 14, 2005, 7:30 p.m. at the Insular Life Theater, Insular Life Corporate Centre, Filinvest Corporate City Alabang, Muntinlupa. Insular Life employees, agents, policyholders and friends of Insular Life are all invited to this event celebrating the best in the Filipino musical talents. For more information call Mr. [illegible] Dionisio at 771-1818 loc 1123.

Partnerships Beyond Time

Insular Life will honor its long-time corporate clients who continue to trust Insular Life for their company's and employees' insurance needs. Dubbed as Partnerships Beyond Time, to be held on February 10, 2006 at the Insular Life Corporate Centre, it will be a night of thanksgiving and celebration of the enduring relationship established between Insular Life and its various corporate clients. Among the corporations that will be honored are clients like Procter & Gamble, Mantrade Development Corporation, Colgate-Palmolive, IBM, Lopez Group of Companies, Coca Cola Export, National Power Corporation and Krafts General Foods. For more information call Mr. Andrew San Juan at 817-3051 local 3197.

INSULAR LIFE 95 True to you

Garci turns tables on solons

From page A1

tives Rafael Nantes and Danilo Suarez.

Four of them are opposition members.

As of late yesterday afternoon, three of the congressmen—Escudero, Golez and Sandoval—denied talking to Garcillano, with one of them denouncing the allegation as hogwash.

Cayetano said he talked to Garcillano in February but it was about a local plebiscite and not about the elections.

Only teasers

Tamondong claimed that besides the 20 to 30 lawmakers, six senatorial candidates and another candidate who ran for an office "higher than that of a senator" also talked to Garcillano.

In the coming days, Garcillano will disclose the names of the other candidates, he said.

"These are just for starters. They're teasers. There will be more names to come out," Tamondong said.

He said Garcillano denied it was his voice on the "Hello Garci" tapes, but the lawyer did not categorically say his client and the President did not talk during the elections.

Not unusual

The tapes of supposed wiretapped conversations between Ms Arroyo and Garcillano plunged the President into the worst political crisis of her administration and almost led to her ouster from office.

Garcillano, who recently emerged from more than five months in hiding, is expected to testify at a joint committee hearing of the House of Representatives tomorrow.

"What we are saying here is that during the election period, it's not unusual or abnormal for some candidates to call election officials," Tamondong said.

"Sometimes they might say, 'Something is happening here. There are terrorists here.' Those kinds of calls. That is not unusual."

"So, why were they so aggrieved that Mr. Garcillano was being called [on his phone], when in fact they were doing that themselves. That is what I call hypocrisy. So, he might as well come out with the names of those who called him," Tamondong said.

'Let them deny it'

He said the public officials "discussed election matters with my client." They talked with Garcillano either in person or on the phone, he said.

Tamondong said the five committees investigating the "Hello Garci" tapes might want to call these lawmakers to reveal what they and Garcillano talked about.

"What we want is for the explanation to come from them. We want it to come from the horse's mouth. He would prefer that they say it," he said.

"Let them deny it, I am sure some of them will make denials. Then we'll challenge them to a lie detector test," he added.

FORMER Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano surfaces in Cotabato. ERIK ARAZAS

Tamondong said his client would not comment on "anything related to the wiretapped Hello Garci tapes" during the House hearing tomorrow.

No Senate appearance

He said Garcillano might not be able to attend a separate Senate hearing on Thursday.

"We may beg off. [Garcillano] would be under high pressure with only a 24-hour interval," the lawyer said.

Tamondong said his client had never confirmed that it was his voice on the "Hello Garci" tapes or that Garcillano had talked to Ms Arroyo.

"He has repeatedly said that it was not his voice. That he was not the one being talked to. Not even *kaboses* (The voice didn't even sound like his)," he said.

Tamondong said his client was planning to file charges of illegal wiretapping and perjury against those who produced the "Hello Garci" tapes and those who distributed them.

This could be done since "anyone," and not just the victim, could file cases against those who violated the antiwiretapping law, he said.

Golez categorically denied talking to Garcillano personally or by phone.

"The statement of Garcillano including my name as among those who allegedly personally or by phone talked to him is crazy and a lot of BS," Golez said.

"I did not know him from Adam prior to this Garci tape controversy."

Golez said he was consulting with his lawyers to study legal actions to take against Garcillano.

"I have won all my victories in Parañaque by huge landslides and have no need for and interest in Garcillano's political acumen," he added.

An old issue

Escudero dismissed the claim that he talked to Garcillano in connection with the senatorial candidacy of his father, Salvador Escudero, saying this was an "old issue" that had been raised before.

"First of all, we knew my father's chances were not good from the start, hence no need to call him," Escudero said. "Second, the statement is nothing short of political blackmail in that they are naming names as if to threaten members with damaging testimony from Garci to prevent us from seeking the truth."

"Instead of diverting the issue, he should just answer one simple question: Is it his voice in the tapes?" he said.

Cayetano said he was ready to submit to an impartial investigation and "face any accuser", but that Garcillano should not divert the issue from Ms Arroyo's alleged conversations with the former poll official.

"The issue is not who called but what callers asked Garci to do," Cayetano said.

Only for clean elections

Sandoval said he visited Garcillano but only in October or November last year, and it was to follow up two election cases involving his father that had been pending before the Commission on Elections.

He added that he only wanted to hasten the resolution of the cases.

Suarez admitted talking to Garcillano "once or twice" about a local election matter in Quezon but denied any wrongdoing.

"I just wanted to ensure clean and honest elections in my area," he said.

Serge clarifies

At the Senate, Sen. Sergio Osmeña III clarified an INQUIRER report quoting him as saying that Garcillano's teeth should be pulled out to make him tell the truth.

Osmeña said his statement was taken out of context. He said he made it as a joke after he was asked what the Senate would do if Garcillano appeared before the chamber and lied through his teeth.

"I replied ... pull out all his teeth! It was a joke, of course ... Have to be careful about text jokes in the future."

Hard labor for Garcia? Well, not really

From page A1

Perreras said convicted soldiers made to perform menial jobs did so while held in so-called disciplinary barracks, but this stops when they are transferred to the New Bilibid Prisons.

What constitutes hard labor varies from country to country.

In Japan's Kurihama prison, the work assignments of about 20 US servicemen serving time included kitchen work and cleaning cell blocks.

A US serviceman jailed in Japan in connection with the rape of an Okinawa schoolgirl in 1995 complained he was made to work eight hours a day assembling cell phones and making auto parts.

In the dark

Police officials in charge of holding Garcia in custody said they had no idea how to carry out the "hard labor" portion of the penalty meted out on the former Armed Forces comptroller.

Garcia received a dishonorable discharge and was stripped of his retirement benefits after a tribunal found him guilty of violating Articles of War 96 and 97 for not declaring his true assets and for being a "green card" holder or having permanent residence status in the United States.

"Honestly, I do not know what to do," Camp Crame commander Chief Supt. Geary Barias said. "We have not carried out hard labor in our custodial center before."

High-profile prisoners

Barias said his office would simply wait for specific instructions from the Armed Forces.

Garcia was brought to the Philippine National Police Custodial Center in June on orders of the Sandiganbayan, which is also trying him for plunder and perjury.

The center for "high risk" and high profile detainees is located in the heart of the camp. Enclosed inside high walls topped by barbed wire, the jail's 36 rooms are guarded 24 hours a day by policemen armed with automatic rifles.

Garcia's room

Garcia's temporary home is a 4x4-meter room with a low ceiling. It can be hot at times but has an electric fan, according to Custodial Center administrator Insp. Beth Zaida Abalos.

The building has one TV, which the inmates circulate among themselves. They are also allowed to exercise regularly, Abalos said.

"He has food taken in from outside because I think he is on a special diet," she said.

Perreras said the court-martial's decision on Garcia would be automatically reviewed by the office of the AFP Chief of Staff.

It will still pass through two reviews if the AFP chief of staff affirms the verdict. The decision will then be sent to Malacañang for final approval.

More cases ahead

Only then, if finally approved, will Garcia be sent to the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa.

"But he still has pending cases at the Sandiganbayan," Perreras said, adding that Garcia may remain at Crame for the duration of the trial.

The case stemmed from allegations that Garcia illegally amassed wealth while he was comptroller.

Malacañang yesterday said the government would pursue all pending cases against the ex-comptroller.

Got off easily?

"The military court ruled only on those [charges] covered by military justice. He is not off the hook as far as other more serious cases are concerned such as plunder," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye was reacting to criticism that Garcia got off relatively easy in the court-martial and that his alleged cohorts in the military remained unscathed.

The Ombudsman has accused Garcia of amassing over P300 million in assets and owning undeclared property in the United States.

"Plunder is a serious charge. He should answer this," said Bunye. Plunder is punishable by death.

Bunye said newly appointed Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez would pursue Garcia's case "as required by law." *With PDI Research*

Endless list of stories from the provinces

- *ROTTING bodies littered the grounds of the once impenetrable Moro rebel fortress. Camp Abubakar fell to government hands after a month of fighting, but PDI Mindanao Bureau correspondent Edwin Fernandez was in no mood to celebrate victory in the war launched by President Joseph Estrada in 2000. He felt bad when he saw the children in the evacuation center.*
- *PDI Visayas Bureau correspondent Jani Arnaiz nearly drowned when the banca of a rescue mission to Panaon in Southern Leyte capsized in rough seas on Dec. 20, 2003. The day before, landslides swept the island's three towns, killing about 150 people.*
- *Fr. Cyrain Cabueñas, PDI Visayas Bureau correspondent, was saying Sunday Mass when communist rebels attacked the police station 20 meters from his parish church in Quinapondan, Eastern Samar, on June 22, 2003. After two hours of gunfight, the rebels withdrew, wounding the police chief but losing three comrades, and leaving an imprint of terror on the minds of the populace.*
- *"I had no choice but to wait for the decisive moment every photographer wishes to capture," PDI Mindanao Bureau correspondent Bobby Timonera wrote. He had just witnessed the execution by firing squad of two persons convicted of frustrated murder, car theft and robbery by a Moro rebel court in Masiu, Lanao del Sur, on Oct. 6, 1997.*

The stories are numerous, the details still crisp and gripping in the minds of the INQUIRER's provincial correspondents as when they were first send raw copy to their bureaus before these finally make it to the newspaper's front pages.

Front row outside Metro

The stories that the bureaus in the Visayas, Mindanao, Northern/Central and Southern Luzon chronicle give the INQUIRER a vital, strategic advantage in the media industry.

For the past 14 years, these offices have brought readers to the front row of events that took place outside Metro Manila. They offered a wide coverage of varied topics, and a broad perspective and substantive appreciation of the issues involved—in the shortest time possible.

From the provincial stories, readers learned about armed hostilities between soldiers and rebels, and peace initiatives, including the negotiations of the final peace agreement between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front in Jakarta; the personal circumstances of Sarah Balabagan, Flor Contemplacion, Delia Maga, Angelo de la Cruz and Robert Tarongoy; Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions and lahar flows, Lake Maughan's collapse, killer earthquakes, typhoons and other natural disasters; sinking ships, plane crashes and mining explosions and cave-ins, and the heroism in ordinary people that surfaces when it is needed most during tragedies.

The Abu Sayyaf and Pentagon Group's acts of terror and the ordeals of Fr. Giuseppe Pierantoni, Fr. Rhoel Gallardo, Ediborah Yap, the Burnham couple and the other Sipadan and Palawan hostages; the rape-killing of the Chiong sisters; the trial of cult leader Ruben Ecleo Jr., and the escape and capture of priest-killer Norberto Manero.

Endless stories

Child toxic waste victim Crizel Jane Valencia and child wonders Alliah Guerra and Adrian "Adi" Maronilla Jr.; the arrival of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos' body from Hawaii and the continuing domination of local politics by a few clans; sports legends and rags-to-riches stories of micro-entrepreneurs.

Pusan Point and the dawning of the new millennium; the plight of whale sharks, manta rays, tamaraws, Philippine eagles, Philippine spotted deer, Philippine cockatoos and Calayan rail, coral reef destruction and the successes of marine sanctuaries, reforestation projects and preservation of mountains and heritage sites; scientific and technological breakthroughs in test-tube carabaos, "sleeping" fish; super "tilapia," high-yielding rice varieties and micro-dams.

The list is endless.

Across the Nation: So many stories, so little space

From page A1

dents used their own typewriters, faxed their stories to the bureaus, which then re-encoded them. The edited stories were faxed to the central desk in Manila.

In areas where there were no fax machines or instances when editorial deadline was closing in, the correspondents phoned in their stories—word for word, punctuation marks included. "The office turned into a virtual military radio room (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc.)," Alconaba said.

"We found setting up the bureau, including the fax and Vodex telephone facilities, a lot easier than forming the bureau staff," said Rolando Fernandez, the Northern Luzon Bureau chief.

"It was a one-man operation. I was the copy encoder (stories then were not sent computer to computer), the editor, the office assistant, the personnel manager and the errand boy. Sometimes I had to cover a news event."

Slowly, the bureaus' manpower grew to the current corps of about 80 news and photo correspondents, most of whom are now equipped with mobile phones, while others have laptop computers and digital cameras, and enjoy Internet connection.

2 protests

Most of the correspondents work in local print and broadcast media. Others are university teachers, lawyers and law graduates, and fresh graduates of journalism or mass communications. Two are priests and one is a nurse.

Correspondents are paid depending on the length of their published articles (character count replaced the per-column-inch system) and the photos. The active ones receive transportation allowances, mobile phone and Internet card subsidies, and training to upgrade their journalistic skills. Those working in "hot spots" are covered by insurance. Legal assistance is extended to those facing libel suits.

A daily menu of about 30 stories is served to the National Department and fed to the Across the Nation Section, its weekly features pages—Inquirer Northern Luzon (Wednesdays), Inquirer Southern Luzon (Thursdays), Inquirer Visayas (Saturdays) and Inquirer Mindanao (Sundays), the front and other news pages, and the other regular sections.

PIONEER correspondents: Carla P. Gomez and Anselmo S. Roque.

Bureau stories now account for almost one-fourth of the contents of the front page.

"We were not only getting the news fast, we were also reporting on lesser known issues in the region," said Fernandez. "Definitely, the bureaus are not just encoders of stories of correspondents. We copy taste, check bad grammar, cross-check facts, names and dates, check libelous statements, and give stories life and sense."

Through the regional offices, the INQUIRER has provided media access to all sectors nationwide, most especially to the marginalized, and has drawn them to discussions on crucial matters that affect them.

Man-on-the-street reactions

A recent example was the INQUIRER informal survey of man-on-the-street reactions to President Macapagal-Arroyo's involvement in the "Hello Garci" tapes. The bureaus were mobilized and in less than a day, the paper got varied responses from the widest sectors.

"So many stories, so little space," the correspondents lament. At present, the newspaper uses only about 60 percent of their stories.

But they find excitement and great challenge in seeking out subjects, and consolation in the thought that their stories have made an impact in promoting social and human values, the environment, the rights of indigenous peoples, the small entrepreneurs and the youth, among other subjects, according to Floreño Solmirano, the Southern Luzon Bureau chief.

Now, stories with provincial datelines are relished even by readers abroad through the INQUIRER's online edition at INQ7.net. Some of them are dished out by the Inquirer News Service as breaking news or fed to INQUIRER's other papers—Inquirer Libre and Inquirer Compact—and sister publications Cebu Daily News, Bandera and Tumbok.

Some correspondents have ventured into broadcasting through InqTV.

Vocation

"Writing can be an exciting and lucrative profession to some, but it is more of a vocation to me," said Fr. Cyrain Cabueñas, who writes from Eastern Samar. "On fleeting occasions, I preach to people but whenever I have the opportunity to write, it serves as a take-home test. To see one's byline can be affirming enough but to shape public opinion is more rewarding."

HUMAN LIFE AND DIGNITY

Church tackles issue of bioethics in confab

By Christian V. Esguerra

IN CHINA, TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE abides by its "one child" policy, the government set up mobile "abortion vans."

In the field of stem cell research, one Chinese biologist quietly cloned 100 human embryos, claiming a 5-percent success rate.

A fellow scientist surreptitiously went a notch higher, combining human DNA with a rabbit's egg for "inter-species cloning."

In Thailand, condom use is high but so is the rate of sexually transmitted diseases.

In the Philippines, policymakers claim there is overpopulation and want to curb the growth rate.

Indeed, human life and dignity are in peril this side of the world and the Roman Catholic Church is challenged to act soon, according to Caceres Archbishop and bioethics expert Leonardo Legaspi.

"There is an urgency for the churches of Asia to address these issues as the reason is obvious – these issues directly affect the daily lives of millions of people living in Asia," said Legaspi in his lecture at yesterday's opening of the three-day International Congress on Bioethics at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

It was the first time the conference spearheaded by the Vatican's Pontifical Academy for Life was held in Asia.

"The bioethical issues prevalent in this continent are varied, hence, at once also posing various bioethical challenges – challenges that in turn call for manifold tasks," Legaspi said.

For Bishop Elio Sgreccia, the Vatican's foremost authority on bioethics and guest of honor at the conference: "A concrete commitment to the right to life and the protection and promotion of every human being from the first instance of his existence until his natural death may be defined today as being a primary and universal emergency."

Challenges to human life vary between developed countries like Singapore, Japan, China and South Korea, and developing countries like the Philippines, Sgreccia said.

In Japan and Singapore, for instance, bioethical questions arise over their respective governments' aggressive efforts to develop new industries that could "set up a favorable setting for human cloning."

The Church is sternly opposed to the research considering that early living human embryos are inevitably destroyed after the stem cells have been extracted. So far, all known procedures are described as "therapeutic cloning."

In the Philippines, Legaspi blasted pro-choice advocates for painting a picture of overpopulation, highlighted by congressional efforts to manage the population.

Despite grim predictions, the prelate noted that no less than the United Nations had pegged the country's population growth rate at 1.44 percent, not 2.36 percent.

If the trend continues, he warned, the Philippines could go the way of Japan, Germany and Singapore which have more senior citizens than young people.

"That means the number of births will not be able to replace the number of deaths in the country," he said.

Legaspi also belied the notion that the spread of AIDS and HIV could be prevented through condom use.

He noted that Filipinos were among the lowest users of condoms in Asia but AIDS/HIV was not that prevalent here.

Thailand, he pointed out, which was aggressive in its condom campaign, was plagued by the virus.

"Despite arguments to the contrary and the low rate of condom use, why is it that the spread of AIDS in the Philippines has not reached epidemic proportions?" he said.

Dirty stations get 2 cop chiefs fired

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR General Arturo Lomibao has sacked two police colonels and replaced them with younger officers for failing to keep their new "world class" police stations tidy.

Lomibao relieved Supt. Remegio Gregorio, chief of the Boracay Police in Aklan province and replaced him with Chief Insp. Jesus Mendez, who assumed the post yesterday.

Lomibao replaced Supt. Michael Mendoza Nicolas, chief of the Manaoag (Pangasinan) Police, with Chief Supt. Jerich Royales late last month.

Before his appointment to Boracay, Mendez was head of Lomibao's security team.

"He was personally handpicked by the PNP chief to ensure that the high standards of police service and the upkeep of the world class police station (in Boracay) will be maintained," said police spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil.

Gregorio failed to keep his new police station sparkling clean, according to Bataoil.

"Lomibao went there for a surprise inspection (last week). He found the station wanting in cleanliness, and to think that the police station was new," Bataoil said. "The police chief in Manaoag committed a similar offense."

To keep the Boracay police station clean, officials have thought of hiring a janitor. In Manaoag town, the police want to work jointly with the Department of Tourism to keep the station clean.

"A police station is like a home, officers (assigned there) should keep it clean," Bataoil said.

Luige A. del Puerto

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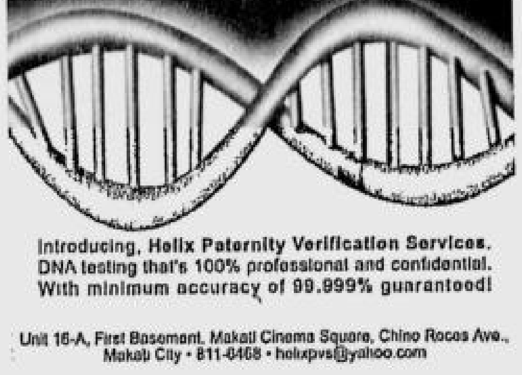

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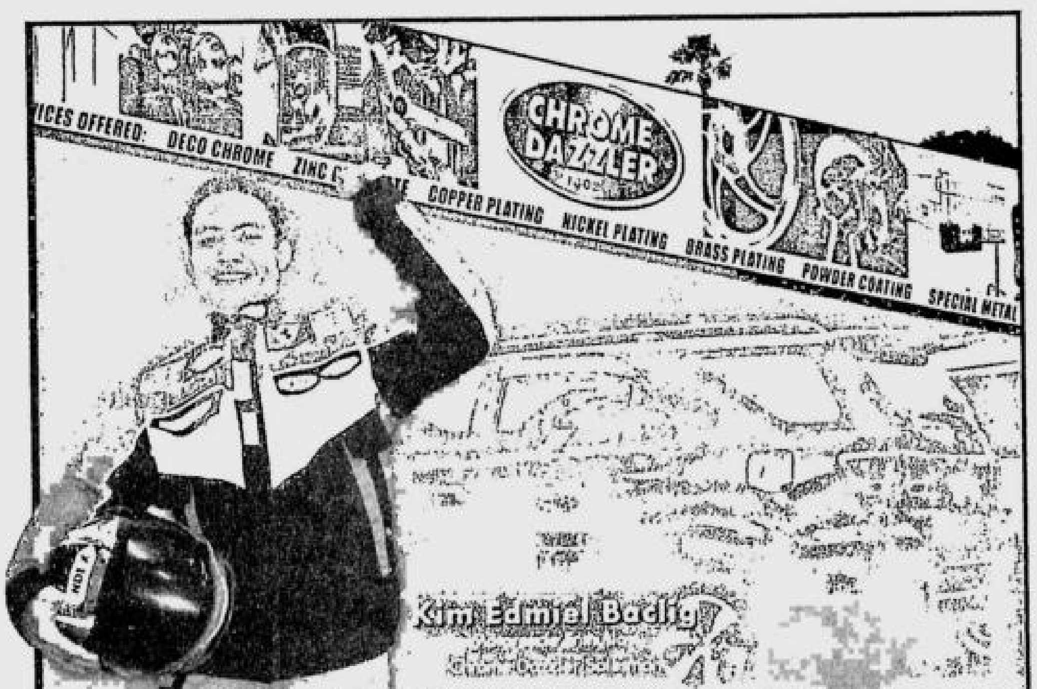

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

King to Thaksin: Think before speaking

THAKSIN AP

BANGKOK, THAILAND—ALREADY UNDER ATTACK from a publisher who is drawing thousands to his rallies, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has been advised by the country's revered king to be more open to criticism.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej talked at length Sunday in his annual birthday speech about Thaksin's inability to handle criticism, adding that even the king has made mistakes, and it is better to know if one has erred.

"Anyone in a very high-profile position must be able to take criticism lightly," the king said in the speech, which was broadcast on radio and television and lasted more than an hour.

Bhumibol, who turned 78 Monday, rarely speaks about political issues and thus his every word on the subject is regarded as significant. Although a constitutional monarch, the king wields great power through the force of his personality and a lifetime of service on behalf of the country's have-nots.

The saying "The king can do no wrong" is "actually extremely insulting to the king because why can the king do no wrong? That would mean that the king is not human," he said. "The king can do wrong."

He also reminded Thaksin, who is one of Thailand's richest men, to think before speaking and not to act on his emotions, otherwise he would regret it later. He acknowledged making many mistakes before he became king, but seldom afterward because he was cautious.

"If I weren't careful, I would probably be dead already. This is the nature of politics or being in the public eye," he said.

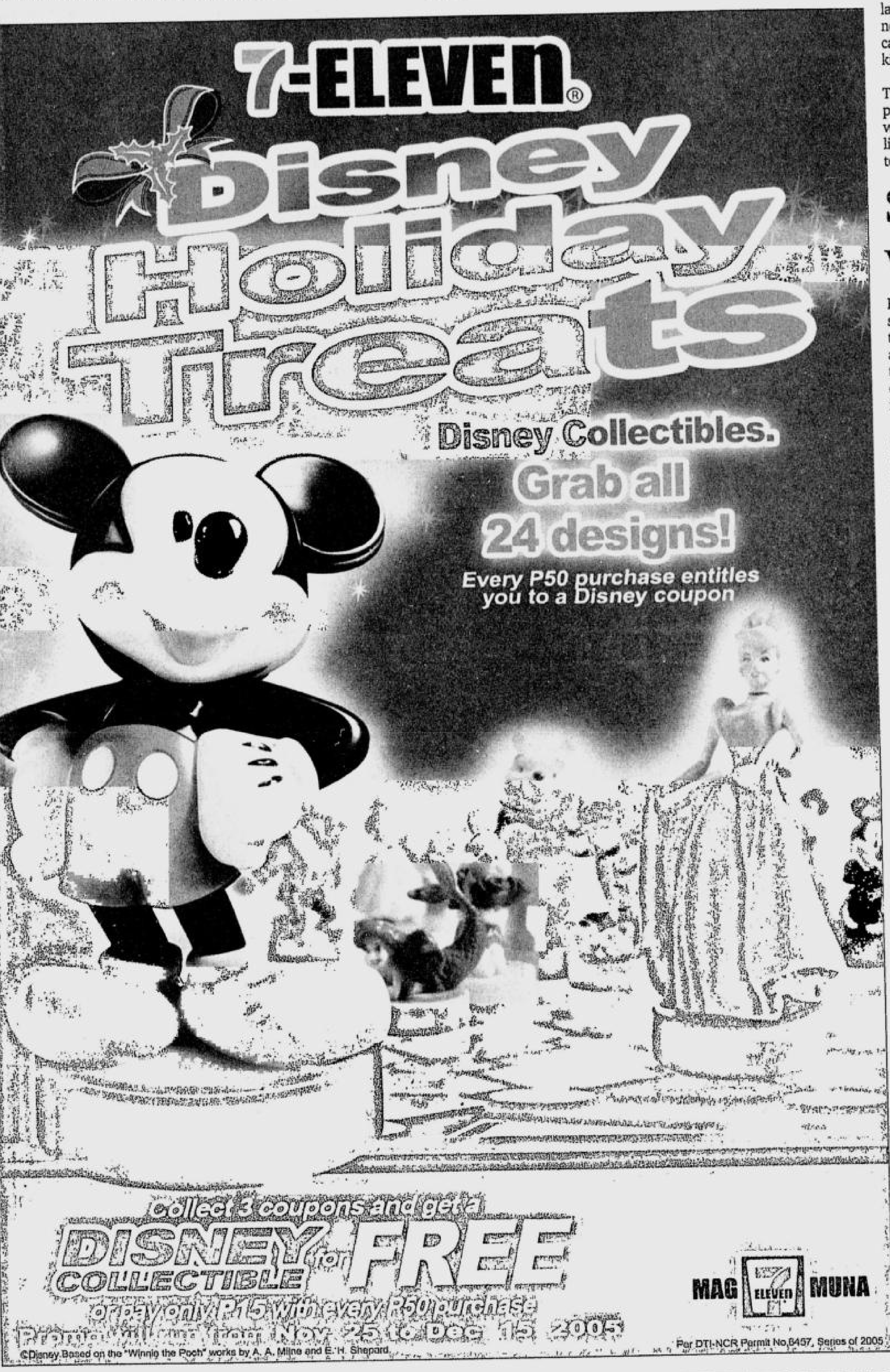
Thaksin, who has filed massive lawsuits against his critics, should not sue them because it will only cause him further problems, the king added.

The most recent target of Thaksin's ire has been outspoken publisher Sondhi Limthongkul, who has stirred up the biggest political crisis facing the prime minister in his nearly five years in power. At mass rallies, Sondhi has accused Thaksin of corruption, abuse of power and disrespect for the monarchy.

Sondhi has set up a showdown with Thaksin for Dec. 9, when he has called for a half million people to turn out in Bangkok's main park.

Thaksin has responded to Sondhi's attacks with a half dozen lawsuits seeking billions of baht (tens millions of dollars; tens of millions of euros) in damages for defamation. He says it's a matter of defending his good name.

Thaksin has been at odds with the press since taking office in 2001. Critics say his administration has manipulated press coverage, forced the cancellation of TV and radio shows that criticized him, and colluded with political and business allies to take over media companies to eliminate independent news outlets. *AP*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Saddam defense team walks out of Iraq court

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—SADDAM HUSSEIN's defense team walked out of the court Monday after the chief trial judge refused to allow former Attorney General Ramsey Clark to challenge the tribunal's legitimacy in an address to the session.

After the lawyers walked out, Saddam told the judge: "You are imposing lawyers on us. They are imposed lawyers. The court is imposed by itself. We reject that."

Clark tried to address the court, saying he needed only two minutes to present his argument. But Chief Judge Rizgar Mohammed Amin said the tribunal had been established under the law by an elected Iraqi government and that only Saddam's chief lawyer could address the hearing.

Amin said the defense should submit its motion in writing and warned that if the defense walked out then the court would appoint replacement lawyers.

"We reject the appointment of court employees to defend us," Saddam said.

He and his half brother Barazan Ibrahim then chanted "Long Live Iraq, Long Live the Arab state."

When the judge explained that he was ruling in accordance with the law Saddam replied, "This is a law made by America and does not reflect Iraqi sovereignty." *AP*

US accused of abusing Iraq mandate with detentions

BAGHDAD—THE US military is abusing its United Nations mandate in Iraq by detaining thousands of people without due process of law, a senior UN official said.

The Iraqi government installed after the US invasion of 2003 is also guilty of major human rights abuses, including holding people without charge in secret jails "littered" across the country, John Pace, human rights chief for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), said.

Referring to accusations of corruption among Iraqi justice officials and police, Pace said illegal detentions were fueling rather than curbing revolt.

"There is no question that terrorism has to be addressed.

But we are equally sure that the remedies being applied ... are not the best way of eliminating terrorism," Pace said. "More terrorists are being created than are being eliminated."

Secretary-General Kofi Annan has also voiced concern about mass detentions without charge, which US commanders say are a legitimate response to security threats under UN Security Council Resolution 1546, their mandate for occupying Iraq.

But in some of the strongest UN comments to date, Pace said in an interview on Sunday that the system, including the pattern, duration and conditions of detention, were "not consistent with what is foreseen in 1546" and complained of a "total breakdown" in individuals' rights.

Pace said that, apart from prisoners serving court-ordered sentences in prisons run by the justice ministry, there were between 1,600 and 2,000 people being held in up to eight known facilities run by the Iraqi interior ministry.

But there were also others in unofficial facilities in former palaces "littered" around Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq, as well as roughly 14,000 held in US military facilities like Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad and Camp Bucca in southern Iraq.

"All except those held by the Ministry of Justice are, technically speaking, held against the law because the Ministry of Justice is the only authority that is empowered by law to detain, to hold anybody in prison," Pace said.

"Essentially none of these people have any real recourse to protection and therefore we speak ... of a total breakdown in the protection of the individual in this country.

"It's very rare to get judges ordering you to be released and effectively the police respecting that order.

"We have cases also where the judge who has ordered a group of people to be released, about 50-60 people, and the police, the interior ministry simply refuses," Pace said.

"We have another case in another part of the country where the judge was actually the subject of reprisal for having found people not getting, as ordered, their release.

"The judge is now in jail," he said, without giving details.

The US-backed government, dominated by the long-oppressed Shiite majority, has launched an inquiry after US forces last month found about 170 Sunni men in a secret interior ministry bunker in Baghdad, some of whom showed signs of torture.

Pace said the justice ministry was also failing detainees.

"The judiciary has a lot to answer for in this country. It is really not carrying out its duties," he said, adding that bribes were sometimes paid for jobs in the judiciary and police.

"This is not denied," Pace said. "This is symptomatic of the corruption problems in this country and stands in the way of any kind of rule of law." *Reuters*

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UN considers military operation to bring order in Darfur

UNITED NATIONS—A JOINT MILITARY TEAM will visit Darfur next week to study whether the United Nations should take over efforts to bring order to Sudan's lawless west, UN officials and diplomats said on Sunday.

Led by the African Union, the mission, from Dec. 10 to Dec. 20, will include experts from the United States, the European Union as well as the United Nations.

Under discussion is folding the African Union's existing Darfur peacekeeping operation into a UN Sudan mission established last March to support a peace agreement between Khartoum and former rebels in the south of Sudan that ended two decades of war.

But it might take until September to deploy such an expanded mission, and it is uncertain whether the African Union would agree to wind up or combine its own operation into a UN-led force, the envoys said.

Sudan also would have to consent to non-African troops, which could number up to 10,000 and, like the African Union, would have to scramble to get enough soldiers for what one envoy called "a robust and mobile" force.

About 6,000 African Union troops and police are trying to stop escalating violence in Darfur, but those in charge say they lack the vehicles and communications equipment needed to operate effectively in the desert region the size of France. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Bin Laden was in US

WASHINGTON—Terror mastermind Osama bin Laden may have visited the United States as a young man, long before declaring jihad against America and its allies, the New Yorker magazine reported Sunday. The weekly, in its Dec. 13 edition set to hit US newsstands on Monday, reported that according a longtime acquaintance from his native Saudi Arabia, Bin Laden made at least one trip to the United States, in about 1978, with his wife and oldest son, who needed medical treatment. The friend Khaled Batarfi, a Saudi journalist who lived down the street from Bin Laden in the 1970s, told the magazine that one aspect of his trip that made a strong impression on Bin Laden was the curious stares by airline passengers at his wife, an observant Muslim who was dressed in a draping gown and full head covering—attire unfamiliar to many Americans at the time. *AFP*

Saddam guard in Australia

SYDNEY—One of Saddam Hussein's former bodyguards is living in Australia after initially being refused a visa due to concerns he may have been involved in crimes against humanity, prompting criticism of the nation's immigration system. Prime Minister John Howard said on Monday that Oday Adnan Al Tekriti arrived illegally by boat in 1999 but was denied a visa by the immigration department in September 2000 after admitting to belonging to Saddam's special security services. "The department did not want to give him a visa," Howard told parliament after the Sydney Morning Herald broke the news that Tekriti had been living in Australia for six years. Howard said Tekriti, 38, had had the visa denial overturned by an appeals tribunal which found he had not held a position in Iraq which was directly or indirectly involved in crimes against humanity. Tekriti gained a temporary protection visa in 2005. The Herald said Tekriti was a member of Saddam's family, a major in his personal security force and also worked for Saddam's son Qusay tracking down dissidents. It said he was now married to an Australian doctor and living in the southern city of Adelaide. Howard said he would ask his immigration minister whether the government could take further action against Tekriti. *Reuters*

Japan building safety mess

TOKYO—Japan's infrastructure ministry on Monday filed a criminal complaint with police against an architect who had faked quake-proof data in a widening scandal that has stunned home owners in the earthquake-prone country. The ministry took the action amid growing public concern that many buildings may not withstand even moderate earthquakes. The construction ministry urged Tokyo police to press criminal charges against Hidetsugu Aneha, a state-licensed architect who had falsified data to cut costs. Aneha, 48, was believed to have been involved in designing 208 buildings in 11 prefectures and he had fabricated quake-proof data for at least 55 of them so that they could not withstand even moderate tremors, infrastructure ministry officials said. The scandal has outraged the public in a land that accounts for about 20 percent of the world's earthquakes of magnitude 6 or greater and where memories are vivid of the magnitude 7.3 tremor that killed more than 6,400 in the western city of Kobe in 1995. *Reuters*

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A raisin in the sun

Editorial

THAT'S THE TITLE OF A PLAY, WRITTEN BY LORraine Hansberry, which later became a critically acclaimed movie starring Sydney Poitier. The plot is simple enough. Walter Lee Younger (Poitier) is a chauffer with big dreams. But depressing realities get in the way of his ambition. He seems permanently doomed to hard times in a small apartment with his wife, son, sister and mother. Then this "giant...surrounded by ants" suddenly has some good luck: his mother's $10,000 life insurance policy matures. Drama ensues as the family tries to decide what to do with the money.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos has always considered himself a "giant surrounded by ants," and like in Hansberry's play, his frustrated dream of a parliamentary government was rekindled by a windfall. In this case, his unexpected luck was the imminent collapse of the Arroyo presidency.

Ramos' proposal for Charter change, which had always been met with a wall of sublime indifference on the part of the public, became a kind of win-win solution to the political crisis facing the country. Unlike the opposition, or even the administration, Ramos had a plan, which was detailed and, compared to other options, looked quite possible. It would enable President Macapagal-Arroyo to depart with some dignity, and permit Ramos and Speaker Jose de Venecia to obtain a change in government tailored to their own specifications.

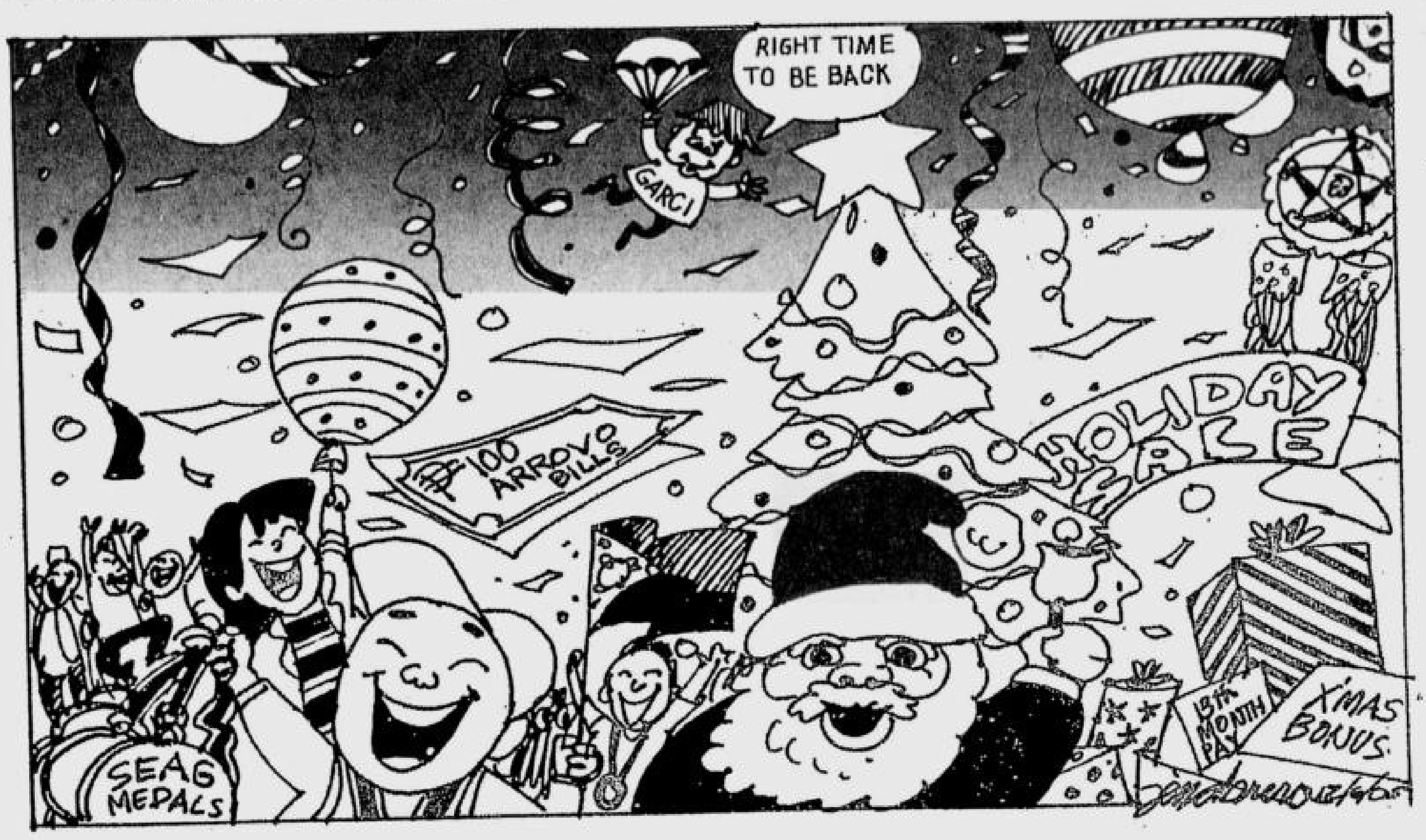
The Ramos lifeline did the most to reverse the flagging fortunes of the administration, and to this day, remains the main game in town, allowing the Arroyo administration to stumble on until 2010. At the time, the Ramos solution was hailed by the ruling party, Lakas-CMD and many others from both sides of the political aisle, the middle class, and even business. Even Ms Arroyo praised it, and continues to pay it lip service.

However, there have been schemes, such as putting forward the name of Rep. Prospero Pichay for Speaker, and various other movements within the President's official family (such as the return of her husband and the upbeat mood of officials identified with him), that belie the enthusiasm publicly shown by the administration for the Ramos plan. And while the House of Representatives formally passed a resolution seeking the transformation of Congress into a constituent assembly the other day, the efforts of Ramos and De Venecia still have two roadblocks to hurdle. The first is the hostility of the Senate to amendments through a constituent assembly. The second is public mistrust—and even hostility—to the Ramos solution.

Pulse Asia's October survey on "Most Beneficial and Most Inimical Political Scenarios, and Best Person to Lead the Philippines at Present," showed that only 3 percent of Filipinos considered Ramos as the person who should lead the country. Given a margin of error of 3 percent, that meant a range from zero to 6 percent, which didn't even put him in the league of Susan Roces. When the respondents were asked who should **not** lead the country, the antipathy to Ramos was quite evident: 39 percent said he was not the person who should lead. The full significance of these figures should be measured against the 28 percent of the electorate who had voted Ramos into office and now seem to have disappeared. They no longer support him, and they seem to have joined the many who actively oppose him or, worse, simply don't consider him a good leader.

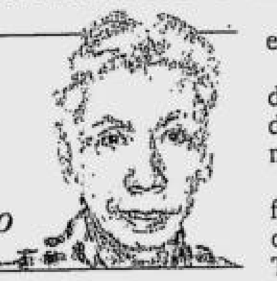
By offering Ms Arroyo a lifeline, Ramos has in the process destroyed himself politically. For a man obsessed with his prestige not only at home but also abroad, how long will it be before an increasingly gloating administration decides it has nothing to lose by distancing itself from him? And how long will it be before foreign friends and admirers begin to discuss the implications of his becoming so actively disliked by a portion of the population only marginally smaller than those who dislike Ms Arroyo?

If life really imitates art, the impending epitaph to Fidel V. Ramos' long career seems to approximate not just the substance, but the title of the play. In the end, his political epitaph may have already been written: he gambled big, to win big, but instead ended up a footnote to the career of one of his successors. He is like a raisin in the sun: his reputation and legacy have shriveled, in the harsh light of public opinion.



Shuttered mindsets

Viewpoint



Juan L. Mercado

"IF YOU PRICK US, DO WE NOT BLEED? IF YOU tickle us, do we not laugh?.... And if you wrong us, do we not revenge?" —from "The Merchant of Venice"

Prejudice is an ugly but antiseptic word. We're immune from bias, we assume. Bigotry infects somebody else: the French clamping down on North African immigrants in *zones de non-droit* (lawless areas); whites against coloreds in New Orleans's Lower Ninth Ward or Malay Muslim police abusing ethnic Chinese detainees in Kuala Lumpur.

But there's "an alarming picture of apparent discrimination against Muslims" here, Inquirer's Volt Contreras wrote. That portrait emerged from 1,185 respondents interviewed in March 2005, the Philippine Human Development Report 2005 reveals. PHDR is sponsored by the UN Development Programme and Human Development Network.

Muslims were locked out of jobs, study opportunities, even market stalls, Filipino scientists working on PHDR were told. Ignored in public, many were plastered with patronizing comments: "How come they're good even though Muslims." They're "routinely targeted" by police in their operations against drugs, terrorism and assorted crimes.

Here are some interview excerpts: "My husband and I were waiting for a taxi in Manila (but) no one would stop," a Muslim woman recounted. "My husband told me to remove my veil. So, I took off my veil simply to catch a ride."

Agents selling Frontiera Subdivision lots in Cagayan de Oro backed out after learning that the Catholic buyer was married to a Muslim: Marawi State University's research and extension vice chancellor Dr. Jamail Kamlian.

"A successful businessman, (my) second cousin sells expensive vehicles in Manila," another told interviewers. He is married to a Christian. To land a job, "he had to change his Muslim name of Namamental to Mark Anthony."

After working seven years in Saudi Arabia, the Muslim *balikbayan* failed to get a job in General Santos City. "Put down your religion as Seventh Day Adventist (SDA)," a high school classmate advised him. "Your chances of employment will improve. SDA members don't eat pork. You wouldn't be forced to eat pork at company functions."

"When prejudice commands, reason is silent," Helvitius warns. Deeply concerned, the scientists ran a separate study "to measure the extent of anti-Muslim bias, if any, among Filipinos." Their conclusions form a PHDR appendix.

"A considerable percentage of Filipinos (33 percent to 39 percent) are biased against Muslims," the report states. But majority reject stigmatizing Muslims as people who repress women.

"Prejudice swells like varicose veins." And intensity of bias varies by region. "Visayans tend to have a more negative view of Muslims," the report found. Between 62 to 71 percent accepted negative typecasting, like their "being more prone to run amuck and being terrorists or extremists."

The roots of this bias go back in time. "Before the Spanish times, Muslims of Mindanao conquered the Visayas by means of piracy." In more recent times, majority of migrants to Mindanao, who displaced Muslims, sailed in from the Visayas.

"Those from Luzon and the National Capital Region tend to have a less negative view," the study adds. There are "callous" exceptions. Residents of an exclusive Metro Manila subdivision objected to the designation of a prayer room for Muslim traders in a mall. This could attract terrorists, they claimed. It also lowered their property values.

Mindanaoans dismiss the notion that Muslims do not consider themselves Filipinos or look down on women. But "those from Mindanao are more likely to perceive Muslims as terrorists."

Yet, these shuttered mindsets do not stem from personal knowledge. "Only about 14 percent have had direct dealings with Muslims." Their information mostly filtered in from friends and relatives in Mindanao and the Middle East.

"Even among Mindanaoans, direct contact with Muslims is limited," the study found. "Only 28 percent of Mindanaoans cited experience as source of information. The rest is hearsay."

The survey asserts the stereotypes "explains hiring and leasing decisions of Filipinos as well as ... adoption of a hard stance with respect to approaches in pursuing peace in Sulu."

But the young here are more mature in their thinking on Muslims than their elders. "Those aged 54 years or over tend to be more biased," the report found. "Those aged 35 years or below tend to be less biased."

"Bigotry tries to keep truth safe in its hand with a grip that kills it," Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore once wrote. That's seen in "the bizarre phenomenon of wars without end, alongside...peace talks without end," in Mindanao, PDHR points out. These conflicts have "laid bare the ugly layer of intolerance and anti-Muslim prejudice that runs silently through the predominantly Christian mainstream Filipino society"—and failure to address its root causes.

PHDR provides a calm analysis of our blinders. Unbolting shuttered mindsets is a first step toward reaching out to each other. For our minds are like parachutes, someone said. "They only function when they're open."

"Your Christian brothers need you," Pope John Paul II told Muslims in Davao during his first Philippine visit. "A peaceful society is built on dialogue and I encourage its extension....And the whole world needs to see fraternal coexistence between Christians and Muslims in a modern, believing and peaceful Philippines."

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Winning

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

LIFE IMITATES FARCE. A COUPLE OF WEEKS ago, it was only a text joke. The reason Virgilio Garcillano was dredged up, the joke said, was that he was going to be made the main scorer for the Southeast Asian Games. His motto being: *"Pipilitin ko po, Ma'am."*

And lo and behold, faster than you could say, "Hello Garci," there was no less than Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra complaining of cheating in the Games. He would later say that he did not make any specific reference to the Philippines, he merely wanted to uphold sportsmanship. But what the right hand giveth, the left hand taketh away. At the same time he said that, his spokesperson, who had a way of being more forthright than Ignacio Bunye, made his country's position known in this way: "From live telecasts to slow motion replays, we can clearly tell there are serious problems with judging standards in some sports."

Philippine officials themselves have assured everything is on the up and up—the judges are not Filipinos anyway, they come from other countries. And local sports commentators have argued that host countries in events like this tend to do well, their athletes exceeding themselves because the home crowd is behind them. Whether that is enough to offset the country's slide in international sports—we've been slipping down the ladder over the years—is of course another question entirely. Indeed, not just to arrest the decline but to surge back up to the top at a time of great economic hardship since sports excellence normally follows prosperity. It does tend to raise eyebrows.

A friend of mine suggested in jest that maybe we're not really cheating, or not just yet, we're just, as the Comelec and Namfrel did last year to help push GMA, "trending." The cheating to come later.

Frankly, I don't know that we are cheating or not. What I do know is that we're on very shaky ground as far as credibility goes. Between the word of Thaksin and GMA, it's not hard to see whom the world community will believe. And there's the very real and very hard rub.

I've always said that our willingness to live a lie, or tolerate a president who never won, would produce the deepest wounds in our lives, many of them invisible. I did not know that would happen so soon and so conspicuously. As it is, the least of my worries is that we're getting this bad press abroad over so vital a thing as the SEA Games. Though that is a humongous worry enough in itself. Make no mistake about it: Other countries take sports deathly seriously, and take honesty and fairness even more deathly seriously. The Filipino is already much depreciated abroad. If you're a woman, you cannot travel to Hong Kong, the Middle East or Europe without someone asking you whose house you're going to scrub the floors. To add to that the reputation of being cheats, of being likely to runoff with a masters' china or shortchange them with the working hours, is to flirt with suicide. I wouldn't underestimate the impact on overseas work with us getting renown, or notoriety, as a nation of cheats.

But as I said, that is the least of my worries. My biggest one is what all this is doing to us—to our psychology, to our way of life, to our very concept of ourselves as a people. Because the truly startling thing about all this is the complete absence of outrage on the part of the public about Thaksin's or his minions' charge of cheating. The same apathy with which the public has greeted GMA's cheating, and which has allowed her to survive, is the one being shown by the public toward the accusation that the only way this country can now get ahead in any competition with its neighbors is by cheating. And which is killing the country. Either that public doesn't care, or it finds in it only an inexhaustible source of text jokes.

Years ago, a suggestion like that would have sent angry Filipinos storming the Thai Embassy and demanding an apology posthaste from the King Bhumibol himself. Decades ago, we would have said that our accusers would do well to show some respect for the country that taught them how to grow jasmine rice.

I still remember the time when we used to complain bitterly about our athletes being cheated by other countries. I remember in particular when I was a kid that the crowd at the movie house where a boxing bout between Flash Elorde and a Japanese opponent was shown nearly rioted at the certainty he was cheated in the judging. Much to the chagrin of the moviehouse owner who saw his chairs being rattled and pounded by angry fists. Those years are gone, and the longer we live the lie, or a life without pride or honor, in time probably forever.

We've learned to factor in cheating in our lives. No, more than that, we've learned to take it as the air we breathe. I remember again GMA's advice to media to dwell on winners rather than losers, a monumental irony, as I said, in light of the fact that they have been covering her. But it's a horrible concept of winning she's advancing, by example more than anything else. One of the most magnificent ads for the Olympics last year that I saw was of an athlete in a long distance race who stumbled and fell close to the finish line. Then while, the rest of the pack rushed past him, he slowly drew himself up and, wincing in pain, hobbled all the way to the finish line. The crowd stood up and applauded. That was the Olympic spirit, the ad said. That was winning.

I agree. In matters of earth and heaven, of sports and politics, of body and soul, the principle is the same: People who try desperately to win, particularly at all costs, end up losing everything.

GMA came out No.1 in the Comelec counting but has ended up last in the public reckoning. If we don't watch out, so could we, in these Games.

Ensure SEA Games win wasn't 'tsamba'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE NATION IS ONE IN REJOICING OVER THE spectacular showing of our athletes at the recently concluded SEA Games. The accusation made by *pikon* Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra about cheating only succeeded in uniting this country as few recent events did and stirring patriotism in the Filipinos' hearts. Many Filipinos trooped to the sports venues while many more followed the games assiduously on TV, counting the golds to the very end. Doubtless, the incredible support manifested by the people spurred Team Philippines to outdo itself. What a Christmas treat for the nation! President Macapagal-Arroyo should host a testimonial dinner for all the athletes and sports officials, as well as the many business corporations, led by Globe Telecom and PLDT, that lent their support. Kudos specially to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo who marshaled the big businessmen's support and arranged for our athletes' training in China.

The incredible showing of Team Philippines should spur from hereon what Cebu-based columnist Godofredo Rivera calls the "culture of excellence" unleashed by the Games. We should begin preparing for the 24th Games to be hosted by Thailand so that we can disprove that our marvelous victory was just a hometown fluke or *tsamba*. We have to work hard and we should also extend the euphoria to the bigger battle against poverty, which is tougher.

* * *

Would Virgilio Garcillano's testimony in the House be credible? Already the opposition is doing everything to wreck it, and the observation has been made that to some quarters, the only credible testimony he can give is that GMA and he conspired to cheat in the last elections. His lawyer, Eddie Tamondong, put it succinctly when he paraphrased an oft-quoted passage about faith: "Believing is subjective. For those who believe, no explanation is necessary; for those who do not, no explanation is possible." Let's hear him out.

* * *

Today Japanese Ambassador and Mrs. Ryuichiro Yamazaki will host a reception to celebrate the birthday of Emperor Akihito. It's a good time to note that, as Yamazaki pointed out, next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Japan. This happened a decade after the war between the two countries ended 60 years ago last September, with the surrender of General Yamashita in Kiangan, Ifugao. On that same day, Japan's war of aggression in Asia also came to an end in Tokyo with the signing of the documents of unconditional surrender, which the old Emperor Hirohito (father of the present Emperor) was instrumental in obtaining. Fittingly President Macapagal-Arroyo has declared July 23, 2006 as RP-Japan Day.

Yamazaki pointed out that since that day 60 years ago, Japan has recognized that its military aggression caused "unbearable damage and suffering" to various peoples in Asia, including Filipinos, for which its prime ministers have expressed "deep remorse and heartfelt apology." Since then, too, he said, Japan has made an unwavering commitment to strengthen its friendship with RP, this time as major trading and investment partner and prime donor of official development assistance funds to projects identified in the administration's 10-Point Agenda. *Mabuhay*, Emperor Akihito.

* * *

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, reacted to an item here wherein I said there was no need for a public interview of the three justices nominated by the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) for chief justice. I said such interview, which would have been precedent-setting, was not necessary as it must be assumed that when the justices reach that pinnacle in their career they **must be worthy of the highest post. Moreover, their thinking and position on various issues can be determined from their ponencias as well as their concurring or dissenting opinions. Admitting that he was the proponent of this amendment to the rules, Pangilinan stressed that it was made in response to criticism that the JBC lacks transparency in its proceedings, and thus the need "to open the process." He said since the JBC had agreed to this amendment and announced the date and time of the interviews in newspapers, a complete turnabout "would not be good for the JBC as an institution as it would reinforce existing perception that it's not an independent body."**

The senator should be reminded that the JBC will be perceived as independent if it's truly independent, and no one can do that for the JBC but its members. At any rate, the issue has become moot and academic since the two lady justices have asked that their names be withdrawn from the list, leaving the JBC with the required three names to submit to the President.

* * *

The President has proclaimed the week of Nov. 30 to Dec. 7 as "National Week of Prayer, Penance and Fasting for Our Nation." There is a lot to thank for this week, among them our victories in the SEA Games and its having been held without any episode of violence as well as the strengthening of the peso. GMA's EO came in the wake of the proclamation of Sept. 12 as a "National Day of Prayer, Conversion, Reparation and Consecration for our nation," and that of Nov. 4 as observance and celebration of Eid'l Fitr, in oneness with our Muslim brothers and sisters. The National Week of Prayer, Penance and Fasting closes on Thursday, Dec. 8, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, with a Marian regatta in Manila Bay, followed by a procession from Manila Hotel to the CCP Complex on Roxas Boulevard. From the CCP, it will proceed to the Rajah Sulayman Park beside the Malate Church, where a Mass will be celebrated at 5 p.m., after which will take place the consecration to God the Father and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The President has been invited to the closing rites.

Gender sensitivity in movies

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHEN THE AWARD FOR THE "MOST GENDER-Sensitive Film" among the entries to the Metro Manila Film Festival of 2003 was announced, entertainment writers were either dismissive or skeptical of it. Some wondered exactly what a "gender-sensitive" movie was, others expressed doubts that any commercial film would even qualify, still others questioned the motives of those behind the award, the criteria for choosing the winner, and the wisdom of imposing "political correctness" on an entertainment medium.

But the winner in 2003, "Homecoming," as well as the next year's winner, "Aishite Imasu 1941," proved the critics and skeptics wrong. The two films are proof that it is possible to combine commercial appeal and a social message with technical excellence as well as a serious intent to examine gender issues in depth.

"Homecoming" tells the story of a female OFW who comes home only to discover that she has been infected with the SARS virus, resulting in her being ostracized by both her family and community. The movie examines not just the hysteria and stigma surrounding the discovery of a new communicable disease (which could also apply to HIV/AIDS), but also the role of women in Filipino society, and the pressures that work to force our women to leave home and seek their fortunes abroad.

"Aishite Imasu 1941" has the big star Judy Ann Santos for its female lead, portraying an ordinary wife who finds herself transformed into a guerrilla leader after her husband's death. But what cemented the "Gender-Sensitive" award for the movie was the character fleshed out by Dennis Trillo, a cross-dressing sex worker who wins the love and falls in love with a Japanese officer.

* * *

"I AM very proud of our film," Santos said during the launching of this year's "Most Gender-Sensitive Film" award. "It's a movie we can be proud of here and abroad and allowed all of us to explore roles that go beyond the usual."

Explaining her decision to veer away from her sweet, suffering persona in previous movies and TV soaps, Santos said it was part of her desire to "mature as an actor, to grow, and to establish my identity and versatility in the public's mind."

Given her "wholesome" image and her immense popularity, Santos, known as "Juday" to her fans, should be commended for wanting to break out of her comfort zone. "Sabel," a movie she made about the same time as "Aishete Imasu," was an even bigger risk, as Juday essayed the role of a nun with a colorful past who is raped, forgives (and even lives with) her rapist, and then goes on a journey to find her true personal and sexual identity.

Still, we need to be realistic about the impact of a "Gender-Sensitive" film award, even if it's given as part of a major film event like the MMFF. "We have other priorities," admitted Roselle Monteverde, who represented her mother, Lily Monteverde at the launch. But while box-office appeal is still a major consideration in their choice of projects, said Monteverde, the emergence of strong female characters in Regal Films' recent movies should come as no surprise since her mother is a strong woman in her own right.

* * *

THE "MOST Gender-Sensitive Film" award is given by the Quezon City government under the auspices of Mayor Sonny Belmonte, who at the launch quite proudly mentioned that Quezon City is the first in Metro Manila and one of only seven local government units in the country that has enacted a Gender and Development Code. Quezon City, he said, has gone the extra mile to implement its GAD Code, the film award being only one project of the city's QC Gender and Development Resource and Coordinating Office, headed by Ruby Palma.

In her presentation, Palma said the "Gender-Sensitive Film" award is just part of its efforts to promote gender balance in the media, to advocate the representation of the "realities of the status and roles of men and women" in Philippine society, as well as to "transform the images of women" in the media.

There have been suggestions, Palma added, to expand the coverage of the award to other media with broader reach, such as television. Her office is also working with QC officialdom to increase the cash incentive, at present set at P50,000 which is but a minuscule portion of the production budget of most movies.

Still, I doubt if even a bigger cash prize would be enough incentive for moviemakers to risk their money on a film with a social message. It will take the combined efforts of actors willing to take risks with their image, creative folk with a social conscience, and producers willing to test the market, and of course an audience open to new challenges, to bring our film industry to full maturity.

* * *

"NARNIANS," fans and devotees of the Narnia books by C.S. Lewis, are invited to take part in "Into the Wardrobe," "a celebration of all things Narnian and of all things C.S. Lewis." Hosted by The Philippine Order of Narnians and Fully Booked, the celebration takes place on two Saturdays—Dec. 10 and 17—at the Fully Booked outlet at the Power Plant mall.

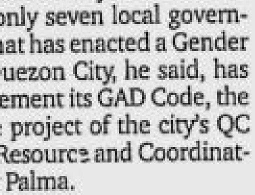
On Dec. 10, a series of lectures will provide historical and cultural backgrounds, interpretations and critical reviews of "The Chronicles of Narnia." Among the speakers are Emil Flores who will speak on "Theology in the Wardrobe;" Butch Conde on "The Significance of C.S. Lewis' Stories for Today's Filipino;" Lorena Santos-Cruz on "Visitors of Narnia;" and Edwin Madera on "Costume-making."

Activities the week after, on Dec. 17, are geared toward the whole family, with storytelling, games, and art, essay and trivia contests open to all Narnia fans. A question-and-answer session with the cast of the Trumpets musical "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" will cap the day.

'Intay lagipen'

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO, I WAS CONTACTED by Mayor Allen Singson of Candon, Ilocos Sur, regarding an article I had written about an expo/fair in their town way back on Dec. 1, 1892. Apparently intrigued by the descriptions of the décor (a lighted bamboo replica of the Eiffel Tower) and the various activities, the present mayor and the city council as well as Representative Singson and his wife Grace were enthused about the idea of not only recreating the event but reviving the activity. After discussing it at some length over lunch with Mayor Singson and briefly touching on some details, I wished them good luck and thought no more of it. Imagine my surprise two weeks ago when the mayor "texted" to ask if I could join them for the festivities on Dec. 1 to 3!

After some juggling of schedules, postponing of meetings and revising that ubiquitous list described as "Must Do," I packed an overnight bag and took off on the eight-hour drive to Candon. I have to confess a bias for the towns of Ilocos, both Norte and Sur, basically because of the formidable earthquake baroque architecture of churches (even if their interiors, with the exception of very few, have been devastated and little of their past glory is evident; I will never understand why parish priests have such incredibly bad taste and can't seem to tell the difference between art and kitsch), those weathered and empty ancestral homes, the towering acacias forming a canopy over the road and the fantastic vistas of the China Sea.

It had been a number of years since I stopped by Candon for any length of time. As a rule, you imagine that things haven't changed since last you were in a place, that time has stood still, but it was a feeling that quickly vanished at the sight of their new mall and supermarkets, the modern houses along the coast and the fact that I didn't see a single nipa hut.

True, I didn't make it up to the upland towns. Come to think of it, I hadn't seen a *bahay kubo* for quite a while although I've been in any number of stylized ones. The Philippine landscape has in more ways than one lost its distinct Amorsolo qualities, especially with the OFW remittances that have allowed for the conversion to hollow-block constructions. That is not necessarily a bad thing; what I thought was sad was the fact that I didn't see any fireflies, butterflies, *salaguintos*, *salagubangs* either nor did I hear any frogs or *tukos*. Now that surprised me until I remembered the insecticides and pesticides.

Still the evening sky was incredibly a-twinkle with stars, so praise the Lord for the lack of Manila pollution.

Upon arrival, we proceeded to the Candon Library beside the church where I was immediately fed *kalamay* and the famous huge orange Ilocano *empanada* (did I or didn't I tell you that there is a conspiracy against my dieting; it wasn't like I hadn't had breakfast and lunch before this). One of the wonders you must stop by one of these days to see is a stuffed crab, fully a meter long and at least half a meter wide on display. It is humongous and makes you marvel at what our flora and fauna must have been like. The mayor was understandably proud of the computers available for the projects and lessons of the public school children housed on the 2nd story that we viewed before visiting the different stalls on the plaza. The aptly titled theme of the fair, "Intay Lagipen" (Let us Remember) was, of course, close to my heart.

A primary rule to remember when you are a guest in the province is never to make the mistake of saying you're interested in something for sale. No sooner said than it's yours without you paying for it. Embarrassing. You have to figure out how to escape their watchful eye.

I think you'd appreciate the coffee from Suyo, the very fine salt of Candon, the fragrant upland rice at P80 a ganta (2.5 kilos), the finely woven *abel* (I unfortunately missed the fashion show of visiting designer Cesar Gaupo on opening night), plants (orchids, stag ferns, bromeliads, and a species of flowering cactus called Euphorbia), and all kinds of produce, such as root crops and vegetables.

Next year's fair promises to be bigger and better. So keep an eye out for Dec. 1-3, 2006. I understand Bantay has jewelry-making and there's textile from Abra, courtesy of Patis Tesoro.

When Rep. Eric Singson arrived, we walked a short distance to the Dario ancestral home that they plan to convert into a museum. This is a lovely *bahay na bato* with a curious old tree in its garden that the old lady, D. Volet de Guia y Dario, said was a *zapote*. First, I have never seen one. Second, I imagine the town of Zapote must have had lots of them, hence the name. Third, I will inform you what the fruit tastes like as soon as it ripens. According to her, it turns black when ripe. *Abangan*…

The bamboo Eiffel Tower constructed at the entrance of the church patio (a replica of the one in 1892, albeit with a steel frame) was all lighted up that evening. A band of blind musicians had been playing throughout the day seated on one of its tiers, but now some of the children had replaced them to watch the evening's program.

I felt strongly as I told the assembly that their old *gobernadorcillo*, Don Lino Abaya and his wife Doña Eufemia and the participants and winners of that long ago fair, like Don Isabelo de los Reyes, Don Evaristo Gray and Doña Mena Crisologo, must have been smiling down at us that starry, starry night.

(To be continued)

My shoe box

MY MOTHER AND I HAD AN ARGUMENT RECENTLY OVER a seemingly insignificant shoe box.

YOUNG BLOOD

Sharon Michelle L. Buhatin

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

It occurred one weekend as she was getting rid of the clutter that had accumulated in our store room. I was busy fixing my closet that had turned out to be a total disaster. You see, I have this bad habit of not putting back my clothes after picking what I would wear on a particular day. Weekends are the most convenient time for me to put some order in my pathetic closet.

After folding clothes or hanging them for an hour, I went out of my room to take a rather late breakfast. Suddenly, something caught my attention. It was lying by its lonesome beside our trash bin. The poor thing must have been asking why it ended up in that miserable place.

I rushed to my mother to ask her if she had any idea how precious that shoe box was to me. She said she didn't know.

That shoe box has been with me since I was 12. When I first got hold of it, I had no idea that I would be keeping it for so many long years.

But then I didn't know that I would develop an obsession with letters. I remember that when we were in 6th grade, my best friend and I wrote each other letters even though we saw each other every single class day. Every other day, we would drop by our school's mail service to retrieve the letters we had written to each other. What silly sixth graders we were!

As the letters started piling up on my study table, I wondered where I would keep them. When I saw the shoe box in my mother's drawer, I knew I had found the answer.

Through the years, my shoe box has held mementos and memories of my past. It used to hold only my treasury of letters from friends and even foes, but as I grew older, I began to stack up on knickknacks that would remind me of days gone by.

The shoe box is, in fact, my Pandora's box. Unlocking it may not exactly result in catastrophe but it will unleash a whole lot of emotions—joy and sadness, hope and fear, anger and frustration, to name a few. Going through the contents of this box never fails to bring a smile to my face on most occasions. But there are times when it brings tears to my eyes. Every item in it has a story to tell.

There's that dried rose petal that a high school "friend" gave to me on Valentine's Day. I had actually slipped it between the pages of Volume 3 of my Encyclopedia and totally forgotten about it. But several years later as I was doing some research, I found it lying flat on the brittle pages of the book. I gave it a new home: my shoe box.

Another item in that box is a heart-shaped bookmark from the first guy to tell me that I was the most beautiful woman on the face of the earth. Oh, what silly lies love can utter! He knew how I devoured books. I even warned him not to ask me out while I was trying to finish a novel by some Russian writer.

I have no idea where he is now. Something tells me he's married. Or is he?

One letter that kept me giggling for hours was from a friend who was undeniably smitten by her Philosophy professor. In class, she did nothing but drool over her teacher. She doodled hearts of various sizes on her notes, while Professor X expounded in Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. She eventually professed her love for him on one of her test papers. Nothing happened though. And now, she's happily married to her high school sweetheart.

I still have with me my first pay envelope which I received six years ago. It was my first taste of financial independence. It meant that no longer would I depend on my parents' benevolence. I felt like I had finally become a full-fledged, functioning and productive mammal. But even as I began earning my own keep, I knew it didn't give me a license to splurge on everything I want. Times are hard you know, so I learned to save for the rainy days.

Photos use up a lot of space in my shoe box. Unlike those that I keep in albums, these photos were sent or given to me by people who were once part of my life: friends who haven't been to the Philippines for the past 10 years, acquaintances who have come and gone, and former lovers who defined what love was to me back then.

I love photos, old and new. They tell a thousand stories. It's history captured on a roll of film. The people on glossy paper may not be around anymore, but their photos immediately summon old memories.

Truth be told, my shoe box is one of the things I can't live without. I could survive without the modern-day conveniences such as a mobile phone, a laptop, a PDA, an iPod, but not without my shoebox. Call me a sentimental fool if you must, but this box certainly keeps me in touch with my past and serves as a reminder of what I was and how I used to be. And it always feels good to look back at these memories. After all, these are what make us who we are today.

When I confronted her about the shoe box, my mother was stunned. And she couldn't say anything as I recited a whole litany of reasons why this shoe box matters a lot to me.

Of course, it was a mistake to have kept it in our store room. But I did it because there was no room space left in my cabinet. Now I keep it under my bed. I am planning to purchase a transparent bin that will become my shoe box's new home. And hopefully that's where it will stay forever—just within my reach, along with the memories that each item brings.

Sharon Michelle L. Buhatin, 26, is an English instructor at the Tarlac College of Agriculture.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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Send back Garci to the 'never-never'

THE PESO WAS GAINING STRENGTH, the EVAT was proving to be working, and the economical climate was looking brighter (much to the delight of businessmen), making us believe that the worst was over and that our politicians had finally buckled down to some serious work for the sake of the country.

Then, all of a sudden, former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano pops up on the national stage from nowhere.

Now we have Garci back from never-never land and, frankly, we do not know why! If it's to clear his name, why not back then?

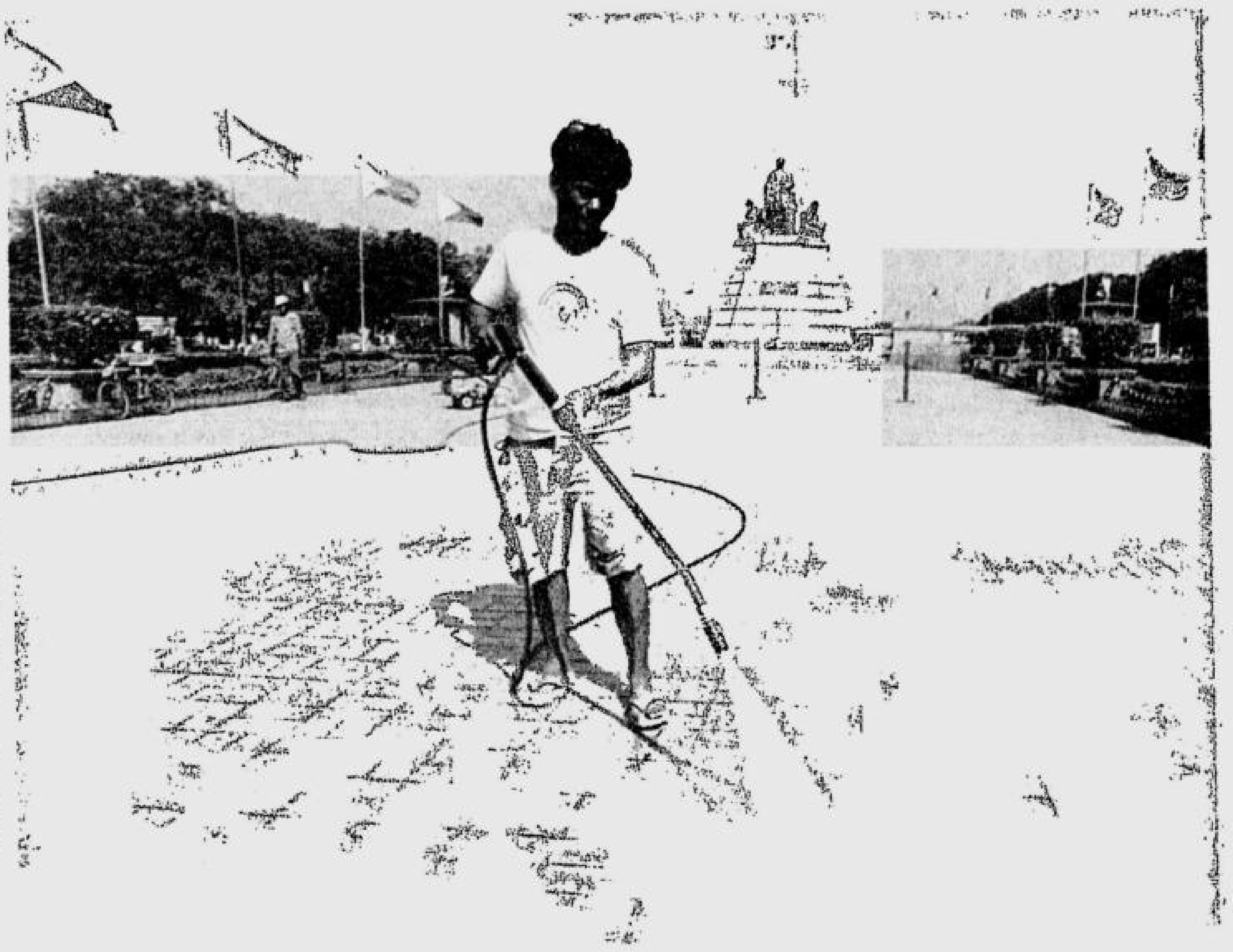
Already, most businessmen have an ill feeling about his untimely presence and are being jolted by his resurrection at a time when things are going back to something better than normal for everyone. Are we going to have another season of political drama and uncertainty? How long will this one last? Are we going to hear that someone paid off Garci to create mayhem once again?

Are we going to be glued to our TV sets once more to watch the drama unfold or are we going to roll up our sleeves and concentrate on the job at hand? Someone once said "Enough is enough!" I believe we should not give any significance to Garci's return, his tapes, his handlers, or whoever orchestrated his return. His return should never be glorified or given importance by the media because we all know where all that would lead back.

Let us all continue with our optimistic outlook. And let us not destroy the gains we are beginning to enjoy, just because of the return of this individual. The encouraging turnaround in our economy will benefit millions of people; and this fact is far more glorifying than "garcifying" for all of us.

"Hello Garci?" Best you go back to the "never-never"!

—DANIEL HERNANDEZ,
Director, Australian-Filipino Chamber of Commerce (QLD) Inc Brisbane, Australia, PO Box 2847 Southport Business Centre, QLD



A WORKER cleans up the Luneta before the crowds arrive.

Apostolate through journalism

I AM A RESIDENT OF ANGELES CITY who usually travels to Cebu every year on All Saints' Day to pay homage to my late parents and relatives. This year, while in Cebu, I attended the Sunday Mass at the Redemptorist Church downtown. The officiating priest, a Filipino with a foreign accent, started his homily by saying that he wanted to read a column of Belinda Olivares-Cunanan dated Oct. 20, 2005, in the INQUIRER, about the "truth" of what really happened in the rally at Mendiola, which was dispersed with water cannons. Cunanan's column said that the rally was a political one, and that there were no bishops present at Mendiola; she said the only priest there was Fr. Robert Reyes. Her assertion belied news reports claiming that several bishops were among those "water-cannoned" by the police. Interestingly, the bishops remained silent about this, making it appear as the truth.

The Redemptorist priest at the Cebu Mass cited Cunanan as a "good Christian who was not afraid to tell the truth and correct Church authorities" whom he said are also capable of erring. He ended his homily to the packed crowd of church-goers by saying that we should emulate the good example of the INQUIRER columnist who is not afraid to stand up for the truth, for the enlightenment of all.

I'd like to congratulate Cunanan for doing an apostolate through her profession.

—VICKY DEANG,
Angeles City, Pampanga

Superfluous billboard

I GREW UP SPENDING EARLY MORNING walks with my grandmother on the grounds of Rizal Park. In the process, I got curious and eventually seek an answer to this question: "Why should one person deserve to have a huge park named after him?"

To this day, I can't help but feel proud every time I pass by that person's monument and what it stands for. For me, there is only one "superstar" in that park, and that is Jose Rizal. And so it makes me so uneasy to see that other people are trying to grab the limelight from him.

I refer to the billboard placed quite near the Rizal Monument, announcing the Rizal Park Rehabilitation Project, with the President and tourism secretary claiming its success. My salary contributed to that project. So if there's any face that needs to be there, it should be mine.

This is so typical a scene anywhere in this country, further reinforcing the patronage politics of false indebtedness to political leaders. We often see billboards that thank a certain mayor or congressman for a paved 300-meter road that used to be of a dirt road.

This practice has to stop. What we want to see is the proper accounting as to how government resources are being used. Tell us through those billboards how much is the cost of a project, who is doing the work, and when it is set to be completed. And for goodness sake, thank the people for the tax they paid, which made the project possible.

Please take down that billboard in Luneta, or I will assemble a group from the PRO-GUN Society and get them to shout "Fuego" as they aim at the billboard.

—VERONICA ESTER MENDOZA
NORFIL Building.,
16 Mother Ignacia Ave.,
Quezon City

Saudis know the difference between Pinoys and their gov't

THIS REFERS TO RAMON TULFO'S Dec. 3 column on the Philippines being a nation of cheats. While I agree in general with his observations, I take exception to his statement that most Saudis think of Pinoy workers as thieves. I wonder where he got this totally wrong information.

I'm an overseas Filipino worker who has been working in Riyadh for more than 20 years now. Filipinos are one of the most respected and preferred employees by foreign and Saudi companies not only in Saudi Arabia but throughout the Middle East. In fact, while Arab countries have passed laws nationalizing most jobs, the number of Filipinos they hire continues to increase. I never once felt or heard any Saudi giving me the impression that he or she thinks of us as "thieves." Actually, a big number of Filipinos occupy sensitive managerial positions in banks and other big institutions where their capability and honesty are recognized. There may be isolated cases of stealing in gold shops, as he mentioned, but they are exceptions. Besides, it is not just Filipinos but also other nationalities who commit this crime.

Most Saudis know the difference between the Philippine government and the Filipinos they employ; while the former may be composed of cheats, the latter are capable, honest citizens who work hard for the sake of their loved ones back home.

—JOSEPH V. NICDAO,
P.O. Box 22135,
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Thaksin out of tune

AS A FILIPINO LIVING HERE IN THE United States and closely monitoring the results of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games in the Philippines, I felt proud of the excellent performance of our 892-strong Philippine contingent. I was therefore deeply offended when Thailand Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra accused the Philippines of cheating. His accusation was full of malice.

Our contingent was really prepared and ready to take head-on the region's sporting powerhouses. Thaksin should have directed his frustrations at his country's contingent.

We did not question earlier SEA Games results when other countries captured the overall championship during their respective hosting of the event; in fact, we celebrated with them in their glory. That was the true meaning of sportsmanship, this should have been clear to Thaksin.

Congratulations to the Philippine contingent.

—JOHN GLENN V. CANDO,
41-1611 Humuniki Place,
Waimanalo, Hawaii USA,
glenncando@yahoo.com

Around the corner

I NOTICE THAT FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada is sending more and more letters to the Letters section and the INQUIRER is publishing them. Welcome to the "club" Mr. President.

I notice that there are still many "vanity" license plates in use. Some examples are "Lawyer," "Councilor," "Sheriff," "Taxpayer," "Mayor," etc. Whatever happened to the police traffic authorities' vow to confiscate them?

I notice that radio stations in Metro Manila do not give out uniform time. I hope the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas can do something about it.

I notice that most consumer products like shampoos, conditioners, coffee, coffee cream, chocolate powder, cheese spread, etc. come in sachet form. Is this a sign that the purchasing power of our peso has deteriorated?

I notice that the 20th anniversary of the INQUIRER is just around the corner. Happy anniversary!

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court, Malanday, Marikina City

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Global effort to combat bird flu must include Taiwan government

THE PROLIFERATION OF AVIAN influenza (H5N1) across national borders is of grave concern for three main reasons. First, the proven ability of the avian pathogen to directly transmit from birds to humans. Second, in humans, H5N1 has a 50-percent fatality rate. And third, it is not unlikely that the virus will acquire a human gene, making it transmittable from one human to another, thereby multiplying the threat to human lives exponentially.

Dr. David Nabarro, the UN coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, estimates that the human casualty from the H5N1 pandemic could range between 5 million to 150 million, although the World Health Organization has a rather conservative figure of 7.4 million at the most.

WHO Director General, Dr. Lee Jong-wook, has warned that "we are facing a challenge which is potentially much bigger than SARS," adding that "we cannot afford any gap in our global surveillance and response network." The obvious conclusion is that avian flu is a transnational threat.

By now, the world should have drawn hard lessons from the SARS outbreak in 2003 which claimed 800 innocent lives because of the lack of cooperation among nations.

We are concerned that Taiwan's location in the middle of northeast and southeast Asia makes it gravely susceptible to the bird flu. This means that a pandemic that strikes Taiwan will have a destabilizing effect on the region's economy as a whole. Taiwan is one of the most important transportation hubs in the region. A huge number of people and volume of cargo pass through or are landed on its ports. It is also an important transit point for migratory birds, the natural reservoir of bird flu.

But we believe the threat can be contained by international cooperation. We therefore ask for the support of the Filipino people in our quest to be accorded full and formal access to global disease prevention and control mechanisms.

Taiwan's rich resources can serve as an invaluable asset in the protection of the global village. We have the ability to produce a generic version of Tamiflu, and our geographic location can serve as a platform for responding significantly to the outbreak of a pandemic.

The people of Taiwan, including the 400,000 foreign nationals residing on the island, should have the same rights as all human beings to direct, complete and immediate access to the WHO system. This is consistent with the principle of "universal participation," which lies at the core of WHO's mandate to advance the health of all peoples. By ignoring the inherent right of the people of Taiwan to full access to the WHO system, the world is basically shutting out an integral component of the world's health chain.

—ROBERT T.J. SHIH,
director, Press Division,
Taipei Economic and Cultural Office

INQBOX

Garci's back! Your message to Garci?

Bakit ngayon ka lang?
—Early Sol Gadong, 22, *Iloilo city*

"hilo garci, bili ka ng cd, uriginal ito, kung gusto mu, may Dvd birsion.
—Rey bimuyag, 30, *ifugao*

Garci, lumantad ka na at sabihin ang buong katotohanan upang matahimik na ang bayan.
—rene antiga, 50, *QC*

he..he..hello garci.. natatawa, naiinis kami sa u.. pati kay ate glue...
—jenvie, *36*

Hello garshi! Redeem yourself by telling the truth.
—marco bernardo, *baguio city*

Hoi Garci, wag mong tularan c San Pedro. Na ipinagknulo si Jesus. Juz tell d truth. Wag mo kming ipagknulo..
—Nappy Fampulme, 28, *Digos City*

Why can't u be as true & brave like duke cunningham mr. komisyoner. bka sa ending sila Malaya, ikaw kulong..~
—ruel r angostura, 36, *cagayan de oro city*

Garci, thank u, ur back and hope u wil tell da truth 2 save our country. GARCI, honesty is best policy.
—Giovanni de los Santos, 18, *Tacloban City*

Liars go to hell!
—Rolly Jude Ortega, *Koronadal City*

hello garci...d truth is in ur hands, so let d truth be heard and it will set you free.
—Anacres Salvador, 32, *cebu*

i hope u have plan B wen ur handlers starts 2 dump u.
i suggest u do a video under oath of what really happened last elections..
—armond ferriols, 40, *batangas city*

be a MAN! magpakatotoo ka nga....THE TRUTH SHALL SET U FREE...God bless u po!
—tricia pribhdas, 41, *qc*

hello garci! ü

Filipinos are not stupid, so stop lying & just tell the truth that you & your boss cheated during the elections.
—arnold mendez, 39, *maragondon, cavite*

O kta mo na pinabalik ka ni san pedro. Sbi na kc ok lang ala kang "glory" basta honest ka. Buti na lng kulang commissioner sa taas!
—Mico Metua, 29, *baguio*

GARCI HOLDS the KEY 2the TRUTH about WAT REALLY HAPPENED DURING d LAST ELECTION, if der was RIGGING of d ELECTION OR NONE
—Francis del moral, 29, *pangasinan*

Garci tell the truth, huwag mong gayahin ang AMO mo matanda ka na makonsenya ka alang sa ating bayan.
—diony cercado, 55, *cotabato city*

start a new life by being true 2d public & 2urself.having d thought of urself in prison, is better than having d thot of urself in hell.
—Alexis Hojilla, 16, *mandaluyong*

2 GARCI: the TRUTH SHAL SET U FREE from these CONTROVERSIES HOUNDING the COUNTRY..
—Francis del moral, 29, *san fabian, pangasinan*

Garci must uphold the values & virtues of a real public servant by unveiling the truth behind the controversy.
—Duoi Ampilan, 28, *Cotabato City*

US Marines accused of rape

of course, they should be treated as any suspected rapists are treated, here in our country..
—arnold mendez, 39, *maragondon,cavite*

dey shud remain in d country, but their war-hungry U.S. govt bosses will secretly rescue them to save face.
—jes de castro, 45, *butuan city*

they shud remain in d phil. For the crime was done here. Its simply d logic. Let us not make the wrong, seem right.
—beejay sebastian, 17, *olongapo city*

They SHULD be BROUGHT 2 COURT, to give JUSTICE to the FILIPINA, dat FILIPINAS SHUD be TREATED as HUMAN, NOT SEX OBJECTS
—Francis del moral, 29, *pangasinan*

Opinion

for me it is very ok for San Jose Timber to cut logs in Samar, as long as Sen. Enrile & Atty.Poblador does these personally..
—roline, 53, *bacolod*

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Bataan woman militant leader slain

BALANGA CITY—A 46-YEAR-OLD WOMAN ACtivist was gunned down by two motorcycle-riding men on Monday after she attended a meeting with farm and fishery leaders in a resort in Abucay town in Bataan.

Cathy Alcantara, secretary general of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD) in Bataan, had just left the Countryside Resort in Abucay, where 27 leaders of fishermen and farmers in Luzon were holding a conference, when she was shot, according to Pablo Rosales, national chair of the Progresibong Alyansa ng Mangingisda sa Pilipinas (Pangisda).

Alcantara, who had been an activist since the protests against the Bataan nuclear plant and the American bases in the mid 1980s, died of four bullet wounds.

She was a native of Castillejos, Zambales, but raised her family in Barangay Sta. Lucia in Samal town. Her husband is also actively involved in the KPD in Bataan.

KPD is the mother organization of Alyansa ng Manggagawa sa Bataan Labor Association (Amba-Bala) and the Alyansa ng Magsasaka sa Bataan (Almaba), two activist groups in Bataan.

Rosales condemned the murder, saying this indicated that those behind the series of extra-judicial killings had started targeting other political organizations.

Since September this year, 24 Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Bayan Muna leaders and members in Central Luzon have been killed.

Rosales said they suspected the military to be involved in Alcantara's killing.

A report from the police in Camp Tolentino in Balanga City tagged the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army as behind Alcantara's killing.

The report said the killing was part of the "turf war" between the CPP-NPA and the breakaway group, Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (RHB). The KPD, the police said, was aligned with the RHB.

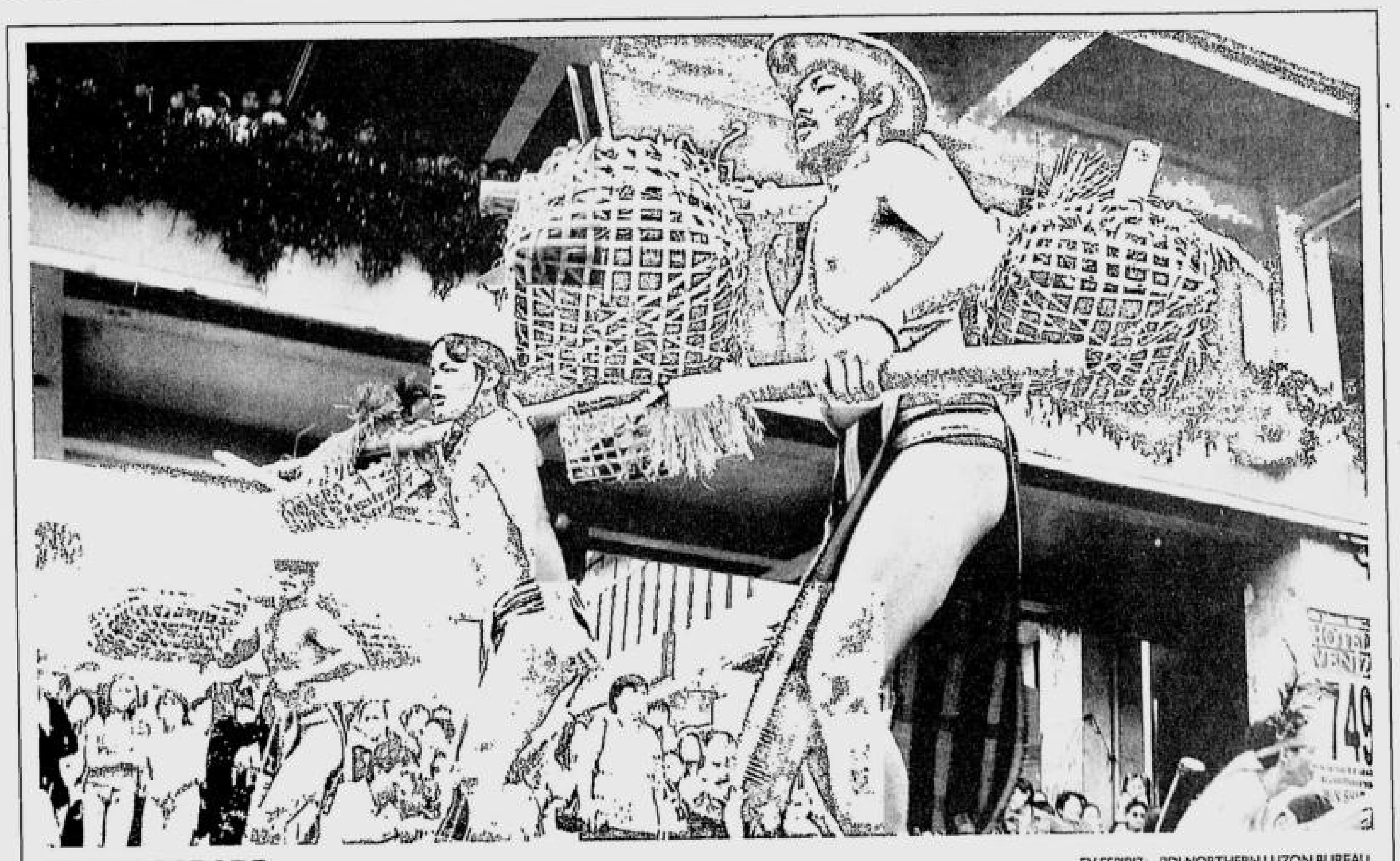
Participants in the Abucay meeting were activists belonging to legitimate organizations like the Pangisda and the Pambansang Katipunan ng Makabayang Magbubukid, Rosales said.

They were taken to the police station for questioning but were released after two hours on the intercession of lawyer Dante Ilaya of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines. Ilaya said there were no grounds for detaining them or bringing them to the Abucay municipal hall.

None of the conference's participants witnessed the killing, Rosales said.

In Baguio City, the Cordillera Peoples Democratic Front (CPDF), the regional arm of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF), condemned the killing of militant activists such as Jose Manegdeg III and Albert Terredano.

Last week, Manegdeg, a church worker of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, was gunned down in Ilocos Sur, while Terredano, former member of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, was killed in Bangued, Abra. *Tonette Orejas and Greg Refraccion, PDI C. Luzon Desk with a report from Desiree Caluza, PDI N. Luzon Bureau and Ansbert Joaquin, PDI C. Luzon Desk*



ETHNIC PARADE

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

The Baguio tourism industry gives itself a pat on the back with this parade of cultures last Sunday, to show residents that visitors have rediscovered the city. Last Christmas, a bout with meningococcemia scared them off.

Another meningo victim dies in General Santos

ALABEL, SARANGANI—A 40-YEAR-old man died from meningococcemia while being treated at the General Santos City Hospital (GSCH) on Saturday.

But Health Secretary Francisco Duque III appealed to residents here not to panic even if the disease had already claimed the lives of two people in this province in the past two weeks.

Duque said the two meningo cases in the province could not yet be considered an outbreak.

Aside from being curable, he said, meningococcemia could only be transmitted through direct contact or exposure with an infected person.

He ordered local health authorities to immediately quarantine the area where the latest meningo victim lived and to administer prophylactic treatment on all those who came in contact with him.

Alabel municipal health officer Dr. Honorato Fabio told reporters that they already visited the place to investigate and to give medication to all residents who were exposed to the victim.

GSCH chief Dr. Lalaine Calonzo said the latest victim manifested symptoms seen on the first meningo victim, a resident of Malapatan town.

Calonzo said it was already too late when the latest victim was brought to the hospital for treatment. She said they learned that he was already suffering from high fever as early as Monday last week. *Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Thank you for making PFEC proud. We hope to see you again in a similar occasion as we look forward to mark another expansion in our business."

Roberto Borromeo
Executive Director

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Closure of Cotabato airport for repairs opposed

COTABATO CITY—THE PLANNED CLOSURE OF the Cotabato airport in Barangay Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao due to its dilapidated runway has stirred apprehension among Central Mindanao residents, particularly the business sector.

"Not only will it affect my constituents but other passengers of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat in case the airport in Awang is closed," Mayor Muslimin Sema said.

Sema was reacting to a proposal raised by key officials of the Philippine Airlines and the Air Transportation Office (ATO).

ATO Cotabato Manager Jun Masanta, who recommended the repair and rehabilitation of the runway, said the project has been put on hold due to technical problems.

The problem, according to Sema, stemmed from a Mindanao Economic Development Council letter to the Department of Transportation and Communications saying that any move to implement the P23-million project at the Cotabato Airport should have its approval.

Since then, the 2005 repair work has been put on hold, Sema said.

Capt. Reuben Stilberg, PAL vice president for safety concerns, said the sad state of the Cotabato runway poses danger to aircraft as exposed pebbles scattered all over it may enter plane engines and cause these to overheat and burst into flames.

Stilberg said the market rate of $3.5 million per aircraft may be costly if lost in an explosion.

"We are concerned ... first and foremost about the safety of passengers and crew," he said.

Masanta said the elements of nature such as rain, wind and solar heat, have contributed to the gradual dilapidation of the asphalt runway.

The condition has been aggravated by heavy aircraft that use the facility, he said.

Unless repaired soon, PAL management would recommend the immediate suspension of its Cotabato flights.

Stilberg, however, suggested a coordinated effort of PAL, ATO and DOTC in clearing the runway of pebbles, sand and other obstruction while the proposed multimillion-peso rehabilitation work has yet to be carried out.

Cotabato traders and others, whose shipment of merchandise and goods depend on air transport, would be affected by the planned flight suspension of PAL," said Oscar Tan Abing, president of the Cotabato Grocers Association.

Abing's anxiety was shared by Pete Marquez, president of the Metro Cotabato Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who said the airport closure would delay the arrival of newspapers, magazines and other reading materials from Manila. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Group slams NPA attacks on cell sites

LUCENA CITY—A GROUP CALLING ON GOVernment soldiers and New People's Army guerrillas to spare civilians in their war criticized the communist rebels for continuing to target telecommunications facilities.

"Civilian infrastructure are not legitimate military targets, especially if these are not being used for military purposes," said a group calling itself Sulong CARHRIHL (Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Law).

The group said that it considered attacks on cell sites as a violation of the CARHRIHL.

This developed as some 20 NPA rebels attacked the Good Found Cement Factory in Barangay Palanog, Camalig, Albay at about 5:45 a.m., Friday, killing one militiaman who tried to save civilians in the area from a grenade lobbed by the rebels.

Maj. Ramon Ronardo Rosario, 21st Civil Relations Unit commander based in Camp General Simeon Ola, Legazpi City, identified the casualty as Henry Gabor, who witnesses said used his body to cover the grenade to save the lives of children at the site.

Rosario said Gabor was a member of the 12th Citizens Auxiliary Army Company manning the detachment, which repulsed the rebels after a 15-minute gunfight.

The communist guerrillas withdrew to the direction of nearby Daraga town, which is adjacent to Legazpi City, where members of the 65th Infantry Battalion of 901st Infantry Brigade were sent to track them.

"We ask the NPA to stop this practice for whatever purpose it serves them," Sulong CARHRIHL said.

Sulong CARHRIHL, also called Karapatang Pantao tungo sa Kalinaw, is a citizens' network that calls on the Philippine government and the communist-led National Democratic Front to adhere to the provisions of the agreement.

Based on newspaper reports, the NPA has made 19 or 20 attacks on Globe cell sites, many of these admitted by NPA spokespersons in the areas.

The latest NPA attacks against a Globe tower happened in Lucban, Quezon last week.

The military said the NPA conducts sabotage operations against business companies that refuse to pay the so-called revolutionary taxes.

The citizens' group also found as alarming the increasing death toll of both combatants and civilians in the ongoing fighting between government soldiers and communist guerrillas. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CHINESE MONKEYS
It's no monkey business for these vendors who peddle China made stuffed toys resembling monkeys in downtown Baguio City. The toys dominated the streets of Baguio and sell for P70 each.

NGO claims fund misuse in hybrid rice program, seeks Congress inquiry

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SCIENCE CITY OF MUÑOZ—A coalition of non-government organizations has sought an investigation of what it said was the possible misuse of P26.1 million in seed subsidy for hybrid rice production program in four provinces.

The Rice Watch and Action Network (RWAN) reported that the actual hectarage used for hybrid rice production was smaller than what was recorded by the Department of Agriculture (DA).

The DA, according to a RWAN report, provided subsidy in the hybrid rice program under the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA) rice program.

RWAN conducted here a Luzon seminar-workshop on the impact of hybrid rice technology and its commercialization program. The possible misuse of funds intended for hybrid rice production was among those taken up in the workshop.

Jean Yasol, a member of the RWAN's research team, said in Isabela, considered the "hybrid rice capital of the country," the DA reported that 52,953 hectares of riceland were planted to hybrid rice in 2004.

But records at the provincial agricultural office (PAO) in that province reported that only 36,000 hectares were actually planted to hybrid rice, Yasol said.

She said the discrepancy resulted in the unaccounted amount of more than P20.2 million released by the DA as subsidy for the seeds used by the farmers. She said the DA provided 50 percent of the cost of seeds to the farmers.

Each bag of hybrid rice seed, Yasol said, cost P2,400. The subsidy was P1,200 per bag, she added.

The farmers, following recommendations for hybrid rice technology, used a bag of hybrid rice seed per hectare in commercial production.

In Nueva Ecija, Yasol said, the DA reported a total of 14,180 hectares of riceland planted to hybrid rice but the province's PAO reported an actual planted area of only 9,614 hectares. The discrepancy amounted to an additional P5.4 million in terms of seed subsidy, she said.

Similar discrepancies in the reported and actual area planted to hybrid rice in 2004 were also found in Davao del Sur and Iloilo, she said.

The total amount overstated in subsidy in the four provinces reached P26,119,200, Yasol said, adding that the findings were confirmed in a 2004 Commission on Audit (COA) report.

She said the officers and members of the coalition would seek a congressional investigation of the possible misuse of the fund.

She said the amount could be bigger as it involved only those for the seed subsidy. There are non-seed expenditures in the program, she added.

Dr. Frisco Malabanan, the DA's rice program director, welcomed the investigation sought by RWAN, saying the funds were used properly.

"The hybrid rice program funds were used appropriately. Maybe, they (RWAN) did not look at all the records about fund releases that year for the program," he said.

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Cop in girl's slay charged with murder

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—A Laguna policeman tagged in the killing of a seven-year-old girl, who turned out to be a granddaughter of Laguna Board Member Rolly Bagnes, was charged with murder and frustrated murder at the provincial prosecutor's office yesterday.

PO2 Erick Kaligayahan, a member of the San Pablo City Police Office, was indicted in the killing of Trisha Mae Bagnes and the wounding of businesswoman Marcela Torres, 31.

Supt. Gil Blando Lebin, head of the Task Force Trisha Mae, said police also filed charges against Kaligayahan's two unidentified companions who allegedly shot Torres while she was collecting rent from market stalls in Barangay Baybayin, Los Baños on Wednesday night.

Torres survived the attack but Bagnes, who was hit by a stray bullet in the head, died while being rushed to a hospital.

Lebin said Kaligayahan turned himself in to his superiors on Sunday. He said the policeman denied the killing.

Police have also released sketches of the two suspects.

Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa, Calabarzon police director, said there would be no whitewash in the investigation of the case.

He said he ordered the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-Calabarzon to take the lead in the investigation and hunt the two other suspects.

"We will never condone the wrongdoing of our men. I myself led the case conference (on Sunday) to ensure that this case will be solved (immediately)," Verzosa told the INQUIRER in a mobile phone interview.

Kaligayahan surrendered to Senior Supt. Elmo Francis Sarona, San Pablo City police chief, allegedly to clear his name in the killing of Bagnes.

Sarona turned over Kaligayahan to the Laguna Provincial Police Office in Sta. Cruz town. Kaligayahan was detained at the CIDG detention center in this camp. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Robbers kill 2 traders in Quezon, Laguna

LUCENA CITY—FOUR STILL UNIDENtified gunmen killed a businessman from Candelaria, Quezon on Sunday and robbed the victim's two Indian associates of cash and personal belongings, police said.

Police identified the victim as one Jacob George, 54, who died of several gunshot wounds in the head and different parts of the body.

Investigators said George, along with Manjit Kor and Jerson Sander, both Indian nationals, was aboard a Toyota car and were traveling to San Juan, Batangas.

When his group reached Barangay Malabanban Norte, Candelaria, the armed suspects blocked the vehicle's path.

One of the suspects grabbed the wheel of the vehicle and drove it to Sariaya town.

The armed men dragged George inside a banana plantation and shot him several times.

The two Indian nationals were later released unharmed in San Juan town after being divested of P12,000 in cash, cell phones and other personal belongings.

In Sta. Cruz, Laguna, three robbers ransacked a money changer store and shot dead its owner on Sunday, police said yesterday.

Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa, Calabarzon police director, identified the fatality as Consorcia Roxas, owner of the Rich-Jen Money Changer in Barangay Poblacion.

Verzosa said the suspects entered the establishment at around noon and posed as customers. *Delfin Mallari Jr. and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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BI exec, 8 others face raps for suspect's deportation

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A TOP OFFICIAL OF THE BUREAU OF IMMIgration (BI) and eight others are facing charges filed by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for allegedly facilitating the illegal deportation of a Chinese kidnap-for-ransom suspect last May.

Charged before the Office of the Ombudsman were Faisal Hussin, chief of the BI intelligence division; Supt. Wendy Rosario, former acting chief of the BI Civil Security Unit; Insp. Noel Espinoza, former acting warden of the BI Detention Center; Alex Bolado, contractual confidential agent assigned at the BI Detention Center; Allan Reyes, BI immigration officer assigned at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia); and Joselito Pagaduan, a former confidential agent assigned at the BI Detention Center.

The NBI and National Anti-Crime Task Force (NACTF) identified the three other suspects as Jayamaha Mudalege Don Keerthi Jamayaha or "Keerthi," a Sri Lankan held at the BI Detention Center; Engelbert Ng Sy; and Wen Yueming.

An Investigation conducted by the NBI Special Task Force (STF) led by Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda showed that suspect Zhang Du left the country on May 7 despite a pending kidnap for ransom case in court.

Zhang was arrested in connection with the abduction of businesswoman Jackie Tiu in San Fernando City, La Union, on Sept. 27, 2001.

His participation in the case was later downgraded to accessory status instead of the original principal, allowing him to post bail with a fellow suspect.

After charges of being an undesirable and undocumented alien were filed against him, Zhang was again arrested on Nov. 15, 2001 and brought to the BI Detention Center in Bicutan.

The STF report said that Hussin had requested the NBI for a record check of Zhang last April 18. Even though the check showed Zhang's record as a kidnap for ransom suspect, an NBI clearance that was found to have been faked indicated he had a clean background.

Allegedly conniving with immigration officers, Keerthi said in a statement that he was used to coordinate with Sy and Zhang's wife Wen in purchasing a plane ticket and getting the fake documents later used in the suspect's illegal deportation.

Keerthi added that he gave P50,000 to Rosario, who was in charge of the BI Detention Center at that time, in exchange for Zhang's deportation.

The NBI also said in its complaint that being the BI Intelligence Division chief, Hussin fully knew Zhang had a pending case at the San Fernando City RTC.

"It is not coincidental that the record check was conducted in April 2005 and the original plan to deport Zhang was also within the first week of that month," the complaint said.

The suspects face charges of violations of Article 171 or Falsification of Public Documents, Presidential Decree 1829 or Obstruction of Apprehension and Prosecution of Criminal Offenders, and Republic Act 3019 or Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, in the Office of the Ombudsman.

The immigration officers face an additional charge for violating Article 223 of the Revised Penal Code after allegedly planning Zhang's escape with the suspect's connivance despite being public officers.

URBAN poor groups took to the streets of Quezon City yesterday, this time on board *pedicabs*, and demanded the scrapping of trade agreements under the World Trade Organization which they said had not improved their living conditions. JOAN BONDOC

Fiery Monday as 3 fires hit south Metro

By Jocelyn R. Uy

DESPITE THE COOL DECEMBER breeze, southern Metro Manila had a fiery spell yesterday morning when it was hit by three fires which destroyed P18 million worth of property. Fortunately, there were no reports of casualties or injuries.

The first fire razed a three-story building at 263 Quirino Avenue corner Sta. Rita Extension in Baclaran, Parañaque City, shortly after 3 a.m. yesterday, SF01 Jesus Bayani told the INQUIRER.

The blaze started at the KTV Bar, a videoke bistro located on the third floor, then spread to the other floors and a nearby two-story boarding house.

"A jumper wire that had ignited could have started the fire, but we are still verifying it," said Bayani.

When the fire was put out at 6:16 a.m., firemen pegged the damage at P10 million.

About an hour later, a two-story building on P. Burgos corner Kalayaan in Barangay Poblacion, Makati City caught fire, damaging P5 million worth of property.

F01 Christine Marie Corcino said four bars were burned—the Stardust Club, Papillon Bar, Fibs Bar and Enchanter Room—all housed in the building owned by Joe Basso.

Corcino said the fire started at the Papillon Bar located on the ground floor.

"It was the building's utility man, who was at the adjacent building at that time, who saw the fire," said the fire investigator.

The cause of the fire has yet to be determined, she said.

At 11:18 a.m., a two-story house on Cypress Street, Superville Subdivision in Barangay Marcelo, Parañaque City, went up in flames after an air-conditioning unit allegedly short-circuited in one of the rooms on the second floor, said SF01 Teodorico Gatchalian.

The room's occupant, Glen Bautista, was away on a two-week business trip.

The six occupants, two of them helpers, related that at 8 a.m., the lights in the house were already flickering.

About P3 million was lost in the fire, Gatchalian said.

'Pedicabs' join street protest vs WTO policies

By DJ Yap

PEDICABS TOOK TO THE ROAD around Quezon City yesterday not to pick up passengers but in protest against policies of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Dozens of people from rural and urban poor communities led a caravan from Agham Road to Elliptical Road on board the *pedicabs* to call for a stop to what they said were anti-poor trade policies of the international body.

Led by the anti-poverty coalition Global Call to Action Against Poverty (Gcap), the "Pedicab Caravan" was the first in a series of protest actions against the organization five days before the 6th WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong on Dec. 10.

From Barangay Pagasa in front of the Philippine Science High School, the 100-strong contingent rode toward the Quezon Memorial Circle, finally stopping in front of the Department of Agriculture where they conducted a brief program.

Pedicabs are the primary mode of transportation of the poorest of the poor, one of the leaders said, explaining the group's choice of a symbol to express their protest.

"The *pedicabs* are practically exclusive to poor folks. Some families even use the *pedicabs* as their houses," said Egay Buenaventura, secretary general of the Kalipunan ng Samahan ng Mahihirap-Pilipinas (Kasama).

Kasama chair Edwin Nacpil added that *pedicabs* symbolize the situation of every poor Filipino: fishermen, farmers, factory workers and urban settlers.

Ten years under the WTO has not improved the country's economy nor uplifted the people's living conditions, the demonstrators said, as they demanded the scrapping of trade agreements entered into by the government.

Nacpil said the Philippines should not join the negotiations during the Hong Kong meeting since it would only "cause industries to collapse, and the agriculture sector to suffer more, owing to the dumping of cheap imported goods and agricultural products in the country."

Buenaventura said millions of workers had already lost their jobs because of unfair competition from imports in the steel, tire and coal mining industries.

WTO policies aim to reduce barriers in the trading of goods and services, opening member countries to global competition, the demonstrators added.

This could lead to the privatization of basic services like health and education, thus raising the costs of such services and making these more inaccessible to the poor.

Only countries in the developed world, such as the United States, stand to benefit from globalized trade, said Penny Disimban, national president of Assalam, a Muslim group which joined the caravan.

Now, who's biased?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

YESTERDAY'S FRONT-PAGE news item said the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and government forces undertook a joint operation to "rescue" husband-and-wife teachers from Moro bandits in Lanao del Sur.

As long as the couple, Felipe and Helen Lacunias, were unharmed when they were "rescued," the MILF and the government can make up a story and the public will just pretend to nod in belief.

I put the word "rescued" in quotation marks because there was no real rescue.

Why? Because the people who kidnapped the couple were MILF members.

In short, it was a sham.

The government forces sought the help of the MILF in rescuing the kidnap victims, knowing that the rebels were holding the couple.

The MILF went through the motions of "mobilizing" all its forces in Lanao del Sur to go after the kidnappers.

Of course, the kidnappers were already told beforehand by their MILF commanders to release their victims. And they did.

That's why when the "bandits" were cornered, there was not a single shot fired.

And the alleged bandits were able to escape.

Who could have escaped from a 1,000-man dragnet supposedly put up by the MILF against the kidnappers?

Well, all's well that ends well.

***

A Moro leader, who heads a Muslim organization, said I'm biased against Muslims.

This leader asked my editors in the INQUIRER to fire me because of my supposed bigotry.

Here's my reply to that Muslim leader:

Bigotry is a two-way street. **The non-Muslims in Mindanao are biased against the Muslims because the Muslims are biased against the Christians.**

Here's why: Educated Muslims and religious leaders are to blame for the Muslim bias against the Christians. They don't disabuse the minds of some of their brethren that the Crusades are ancient history.

In the Middle Ages, the Christians launched campaigns for the recovery of the Holy Land which was then in the hands of Muslims.

These infamous campaigns, now called the Crusades, pitted Christian soldiers against Muslim warriors.

But since educated Muslims and imams want to hold their poor constituents by the neck, they still teach them the "holy war or jihad."

Muslim society being feudalistic, many Muslims are practically held in bondage by their educated and religious leaders.

I once asked an unenlightened Muslim why there was bad blood between Filipino Muslims and their Christian brothers. His reply: "*Kasi kumampi kayo sa mga Kastila* (Because you sided with the Spaniards)."

Another misconception foisted by educated and religious Muslims on their brethren: Christians are dirty not only because they use paper in wiping themselves but also because they eat pork.

Now, who's biased?

Ex-justice is YMCA prexy anew

FORMER SUPREME COURT JUSTICE Regino C. Hermosisima Jr. has been reelected national president of the Young Men's Christian Association of the Philippines. Hermosisima, a senior member of the Judicial and Bar Council, and other officials will be inducted into office on Jan. 14.

The YMCA national board will also hold its first meeting on the same day, according to YMCA National General Secretary Levi G. Siaron.

METROBRIEFS

Quick-thinking witnesses saved trader

HUHUHU, SALAMAT LIGTAS KAMI

ILLUSTRATIONS: ANTHONY MISTADES

PROMPT calls from witnesses became the key to quick coordination between responding police teams which rescued a Chinese-Filipino businesswoman from kidnappers in Rizal on Sunday afternoon. "The calls from the concerned citizens were very timely. We were able to immediately conduct dragnet operations," Rizal Provincial Police intelligence chief Supt. Joel Garcia told the INQUIRER. Because of an alert public, the trader, a certain Ong, and her driver were rescued just a few hours after they were abducted near her farm in Teresa, Rizal. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

'Killer highway' claims another life

QUEZON City's "killer highway," Commonwealth Avenue, claimed another life yesterday after a woman bringing her daughter to school was hit and killed by a speeding bus. Lolita Cisneros, 43, was crossing the avenue at 5:30 a.m. with 10-year-old daughter Marjorie, when a passenger bus rammed into them near corner Zuzuarigue Street, according to Quezon City traffic police. The bus from Gasat Bus Lines, with plate number TWV-603, sped away instead of stopping. Cisneros died instantly, while her daughter, a grade school pupil, sustained minor injuries and was taken to the East Avenue Medical Center. The driver was still at large as of press time, but the manager of the bus company had reportedly offered to shoulder the family's hospital and funeral expenses. Commonwealth Avenue is one of the most dangerous roads in Metro Manila, according to data from the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority. *DJ Yap*

Fake Reno products seized

LIVER KAYA NG ANO ITO?

AGENTS of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) seized some P600,000 worth of fake Reno liver spread from three grocery stores in Metro Manila last Friday. The fake products were being sold at Harikiri Trading owned by a certain Kevin Zhan or Xian Xje Zhan located at 41 Escoda Street, San Rafael Village, Tondo, Manila; the Padre Algue Grocery, also owned by Zhan and located at 1141 Padre Algue St., also in Tondo; and A & I Grocery owned by Yang Xiaofeng Yu of Katuparan Street, Commonwealth, Quezon City. The two traders face charges of violating the Intellectual Property Code and trademark infringement. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Cop shoots another by accident

AN ACCIDENTAL shooting involving two policemen Sunday evening in Manila marred the otherwise peaceful 23rd Southeast Asian Games which officially ended yesterday. A report from the National Capital Regional Police Office Tactical Operation Center identified the policemen as PO1 Virgilio Ablaza and PO1 Rodolfo G. Arong of the Northern Police District. Both were temporarily assigned to provide security to the SEA Games athletes and delegates billeted at the Grand Boulevard Hotel in Manila. According to the report, the two policemen were at the hotel lobby when Arong's bag, which contained his service firearm, fell to the floor and went off, wounding Ablaza in the left thigh. He was brought by Arong to the hospital for treatment. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

'Angels' concert at La Salle on Dec. 18

THE ANGELS Institute of Learning and Angeli Dei Schools in Mandaluyong City will have a fundraising concert titled "The Sounds of Angels" on Dec. 18 at St. Joseph's Theater, La Salle Greenhills. The concert aims to raise funds for 16 students in the schools who are scholars of the Foundation for Disadvantaged Children, a non-stock and non-profit association that caters to pre-school and elementary deaf children, children with autism and other related disorders. The foundation aims to give these children and their families the hope of a bright future through education despite their disabilities. For donations please call Letecia Uy, directress at 5313082 or 5325795.

Makati cops go hi-tech

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MAKATI CITY RESIDENTS CAN look forward to quick and prompt police response in case of an emergency.

The local government has finished installing the Global Positioning System (GPS) in 35 of its mobile vehicles, mainly used by policemen and other security and rescue agencies, City Hall announced yesterday.

Mayor Jejomar Binay, inspired by the advanced emergency response systems used in the United States, decided to install the GPS to beef up the city's security and emergency response capabilities, Joey Salgado, Makati Information and Community Relations head, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The GPS is a software program that pinpoints the location of vehicles on a 24/7 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) basis, allowing the tracker to immediately deploy the vehicle nearest to an emergency, he explained.

"It will help cut the response time of Makati's emergency units," Binay said in a statement.

Salgado said that before, it would take policemen and other rescue operatives 15 minutes to respond to a call for help. But with the GPS, they could get to the site of an emergency in just five minutes.

All tracking activities will be supervised at the Makati Command Center, which is being set up on the 24th floor of the city hall. This makes Makati the first local government unit to open a command center in the country patterned after those in the US.

When fully operational, the center will be able to answer emergency calls from various points in the city and immediately dispatch response teams from the police, fire, emergency health and rescue services or other public safety agencies, added Salgado.

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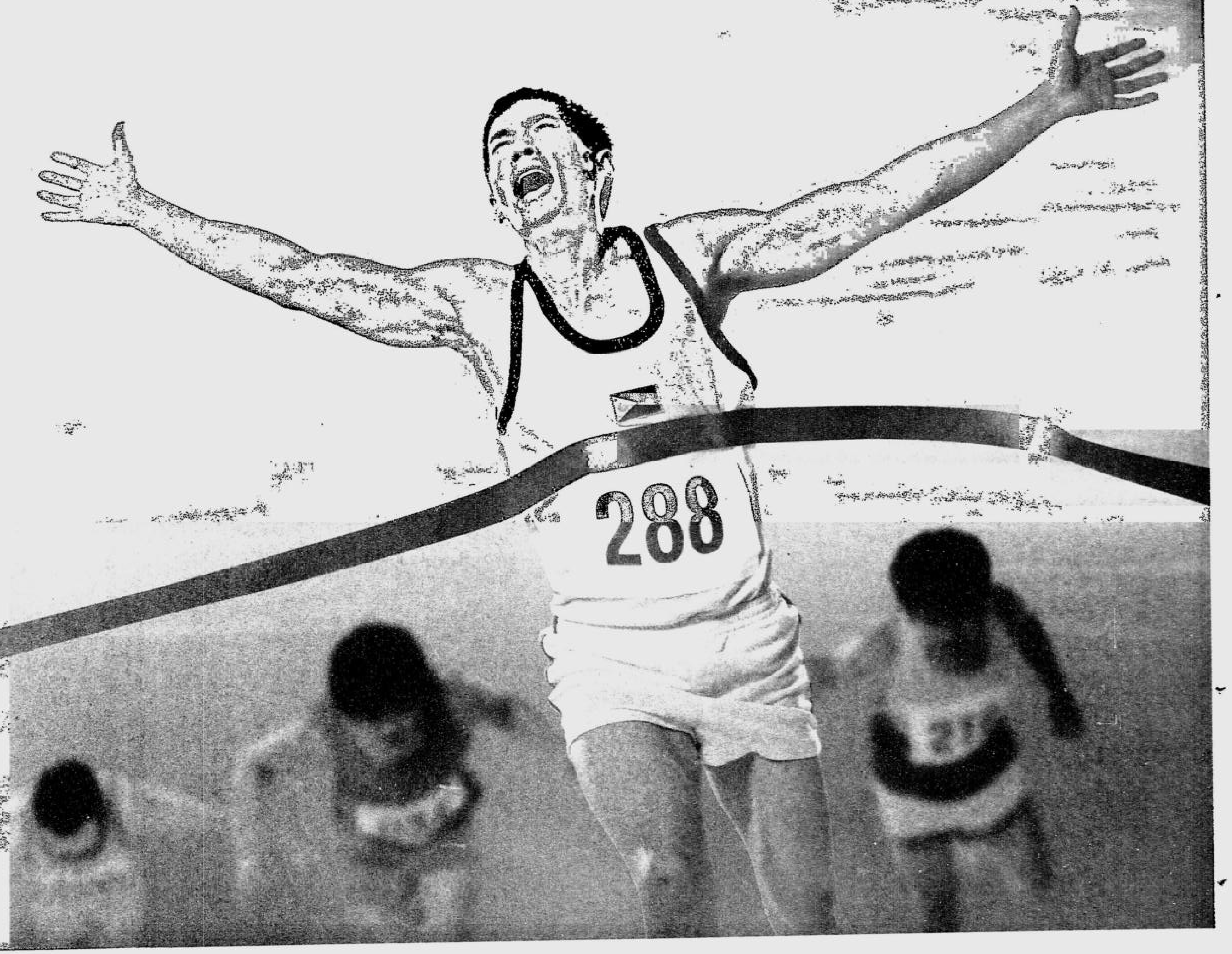

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

Molina, other veterans gain full SEAG stardom

FIREWORKS light up the sky above the Quirino Grandstand as the 23rd Southeast Asian Games finally draw to a close. EDWIN BACASMAS

New aces join roll of honor

SWIMMER MIGUEL MOLINA, diver Shiela Mae Perez and rower Benjie Tolentino finally rose to stardom and sparked the country's breakthrough overall victory in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games.

Molina, a US student whose parents reside in Japan, came up with three individual golds, a silver and a bronze in the relay and stood at the forefront of the unprecedented and runaway RP campaign that produced a final gold-silver-bronze medal harvest of 113-76-91.

Perez dove for two individual victories and one in the synchronized event while Tolentino rowed for a singles gold and two in the pairs categories as they finally asserted themselves in the country's third staging of this biennial sportsfest that drew 11 countries.

There were a few heartbreaks but they were snowed under by the explosive performances of the established stars led by former world pool champion Alex Pagulayan, wushu's Willy Wang, golfer Juvic Pagunsan, taekwondo-jin Marie Antoinette Rivero, karate-do's Gretchen Malalad, boxer Harry Tañamor, gymnast Roel Ramirez and skeet shooter Paul Brian Rosario.

The Canada-based Pagulayan more than justified his recent reacquisition of citizenship by scooping three golds as lead star of a team that hardly missed the world famous Efren "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante.

Ronato Alcano and Leonardo Andam wound up with two golds and Rubilen Amit matched that winning effort in the women's division as the cue artists captured eight of the 14 golds at stake.

Wang duplicated his golden double in the 2003 Vietnam Games and Vicky Ting also added two victories for the wushu team that became the most successful contingent with 11 triumphs in 21 events.

In his last year as an amateur, Pagunsan won the individual title and sparked the men's team to victory while Rivero, who came close to a medal in the last Olympics, sparked taekwondo's six-gold splurge.

MOLINA/ A21

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SEA Games MEDAL TALLY

Country	G	S	B	Total	Country	G	S	B	Total
PHILIPPINES	113	76	85	274	MYANMAR	16	34	47	97
THAILAND	75	77	107	259	LAOS	3	4	12	19
VIETNAM	64	62	81	207	BRUNEI	0	2	2	4
MALAYSIA	56	47	60	163	CAMBODIA	0	1	8	9
INDONESIA	48	73	83	204	TIMOR LESTE	0	0	3	3
SINGAPORE	40	31	53	124	TOTAL	415	407	541	1363

Medal tally (As of 8:04 p.m. December 4, 2005) — from the Philsoc website

Reyes bags ₱10.8M in Florida 8-ball tilt

REYES: In the groove

EFREN "BATA" Reyes is far from being over the hill. He's King of the Hill.

The 50-year-old Filipino billiards icon downed defending champion Mike Sigel, 8-0, 8-5, Sunday to rule the IPT'S King of the Hill Invitational 8-Ball Shootout in Orlando, Florida, and earn his biggest purse ever of $200,000 (approximately P10.8 million).

Reyes reached the final of the $1-mil-

REYES 25 A0

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*[illegible] Kia Motors' factory rating for manual transmission at constant speed of 60 kph.

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Wushu bets score heaviest for RP

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WUSHU, TRACK AND FIELD, BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER, BOXING, traditional boat race and taekwondo provided majority of the gold medals that sparked the Philippines to the overall championship of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games which ended yesterday.

Based on a pre-Games projection, wushu outdid itself by winning 11 of the 21 golds at stake in the Chinese martial art, improving on its 2003 Vietnam SEAG haul of seven.

While wushu officials justified their request to add more events this time, the athletes were up to the task as they stayed for months training in China to learn from the kung fu masters themselves.

Athletics, whose president had boasted of an overall title in the sport with as many as 15 golds, snared nine and lost its tag as the RP's No. 1 gold medal machine for the first time in three SEAGs.

Track and field boss Go Teng Kok has apologized for making an empty boast, but asked that the performance of the country's top track and field stars are properly recognized.

"I'm sorry, I overestimated it, but please bear in mind that my athletes performed exceptionally well with two of them (hammer thrower Arneil Ferreira and long jumper Henry Dagmil) setting new SEAG records," said Go.

Billiards and snooker as well as traditional boat race should be the MVPs of the Philippines' SEAG campaign. The cue artists won eight of the 14 golds even without Efren "Bata" Reyes and Django Bustamante, and the rowers pulled off an unprecedented sweep of all the six gold medals staked.

Boxing didn't give a projection but came up with eight gold medals—four of them in the women's event—and in the process unseated the Thai fighters as overall champions. Taekwondo retained the overall title, as promised, with six gold medals, although the jins failed to match the 1991 Manila SEAG output of eight golds.

The young aquatics squad promised seven golds but grabbed a total of nine while producing two of the Games' most successful athletes.

Shiela Mae Perez captured three golds to give diving five first places, while Miguel Molina accounted for three of the four individual golds in swimming and emerged as the top Filipino athlete in the SEAG by adding an individual silver and a bronze in the medley relay.

Also fulfilling their promises were dancesports which scooped the titles in the Standard and Latin American events; the Fil-Am-powered tennis team which copped three golds; bowling which grabbed four, including the men's and women's Masters golds, and wrestling which surpassed the four it pledged to win by coming up with five golds.

As expected, softball delivered a golden double on its return to the Games, and the baseball gold was in the bag even before the first pitch was thrown.

Judo, karatedo, archery and body building raked in the number of gold medals they promised to do, but the exceptional NSA was muay thai, which wrested three of the seven golds away from the Thais, who were expected to sweep their native sport.

Of the NSAs which missed the gold, table tennis was the most impressive after clinching a first ever silver through Richard Gonzales in the men's singles. He also sparked the RP men's team to an earlier bronze medal, which the country last achieved in 1999.

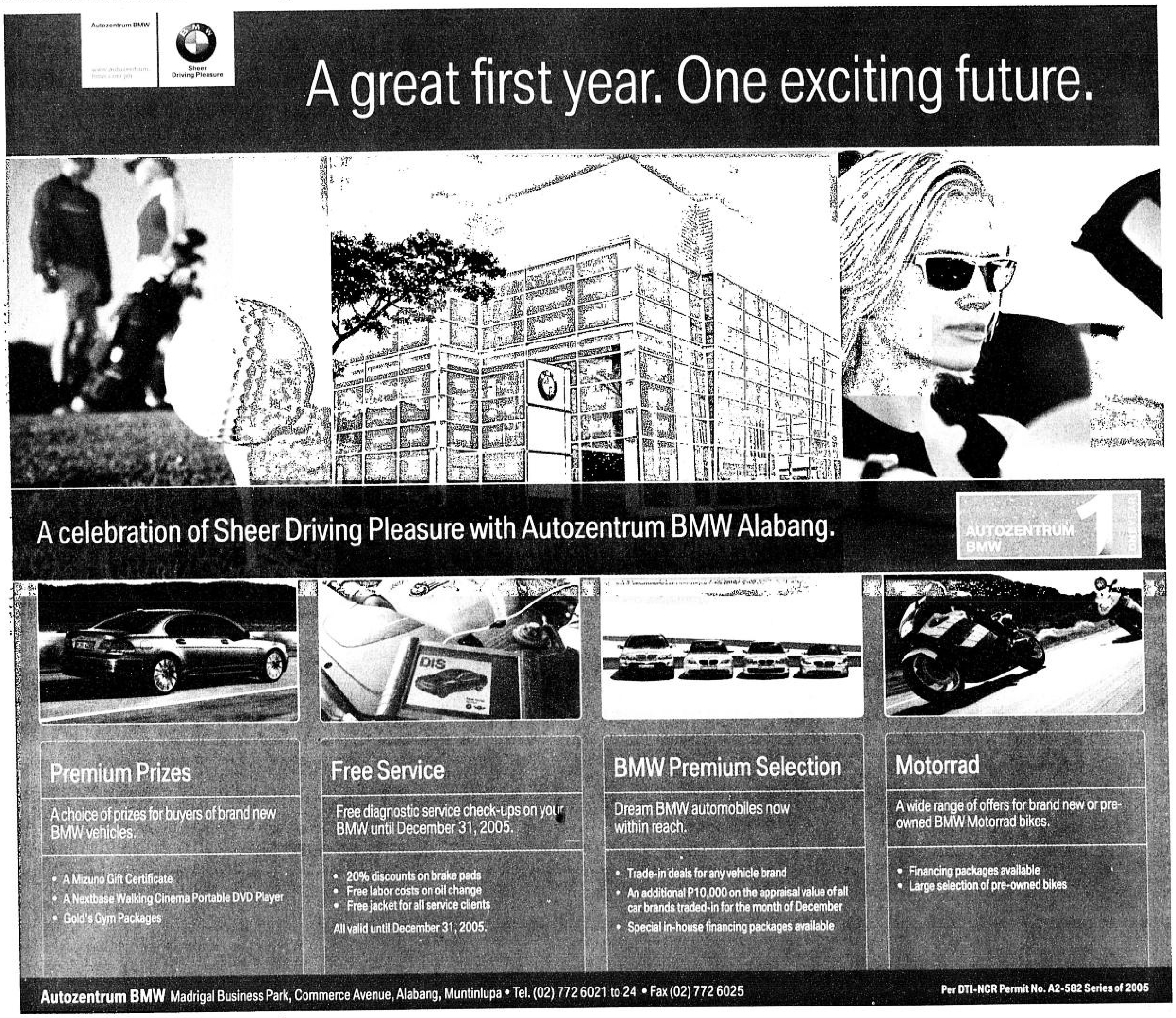
Badminton, whose tickets became the hottest commodity in the absence of basketball, produced only one win in 20 matches.

Canoe-kayak failed to get a share of the seven golds, while chess, saddled by players at odds with officials and missing Grandmaster Mark Paragua, laid a big fat egg.

Men's football played beyond expectation with the help of Fil-foreign players, but the women's side fell flat on its face after promising a medal.

Though cycling took two golds, it was still way below the promise of six gold medals, while triathlon predicted two golds but could only come up with a silver and a bronze.

Petanque had one bronze but lawn bowls came up with a gold, while volleyball produced just a bronze from the men's and women's indoors and beach events.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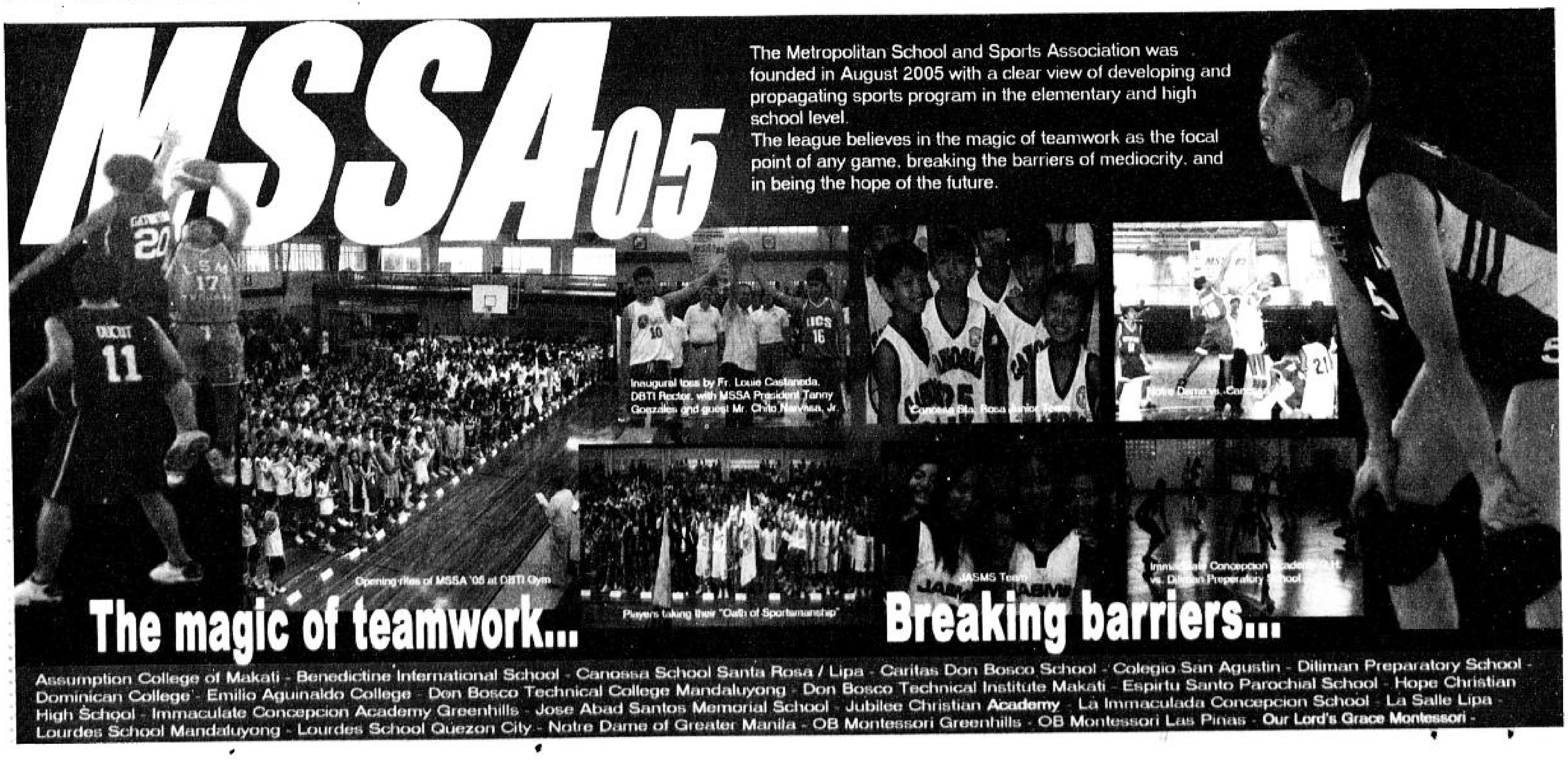

MSSA 05

The Metropolitan School and Sports Association was founded in August 2005 with a clear view of developing and propagating sports program in the elementary and high school level.
The league believes in the magic of teamwork as the focal point of any game, breaking the barriers of mediocrity, and in being the hope of the future.

Inaugural toss by Fr. Louie Castaneda, DBTI Rector, with MSSA President Tanny Gonzales and guest Mr. Chito Narvasa, Jr.
Canossa Sta. Rosa Junior Team
Notre Dame vs. Canossa
Opening rites of MSSA '05 at DBTI Gym
Players taking their "Oath of Sportsmanship"
JASMS Team
Immaculate Concepcion Academy G.H. vs. Diliman Preparatory School

The magic of teamwork... Breaking barriers...

Assumption College of Makati - Benedictine International School - Canossa School Santa Rosa / Lipa - Caritas Don Bosco School - Colegio San Agustin - Diliman Preparatory School - Dominican College - Emilio Aguinaldo College - Don Bosco Technical College Mandaluyong - Don Bosco Technical Institute Makati - Espirtu Santo Parochial School - Hope Christian High School - Immaculate Concepcion Academy Greenhills - Jose Abad Santos Memorial School - Jubilee Christian Academy - La Immaculada Concepcion School - La Salle Lipa - Lourdes School Mandaluyong - Lourdes School Quezon City - Notre Dame of Greater Manila - OB Montessori Greenhills - OB Montessori Las Pinas - Our Lord's Grace Montessori -

Molina, other vets gain full stardom

From page A19

MIGHTY MOLINA: Three cheers for 3 golds

Malalad, a former beauty queen contestant, struck anew in karate along with two other first-time winners, Tañamor retained his light flyweight title as the RP boxers dethroned Thailand for the overall title with eight golds and

Ramirez accounted for the two victories salvaged in gymnastics while Rosario, silver medalist the last time out, won two of the three golds nailed by the shooters.

Jasmine Figueroa, whose stock rose following her impressive stint in the Olympics, bombed out in archery but a rookie teammate, Amaya Paz, more than ma de up for that debacle by winning twice.

Markwin Tee, the youngest Filipino bowler at 16, was the toast in bowling after ruling the men's Masters after an earlier impressive victory by Liza Clutario in the women's Masters.

Jimar Aing took over as new 400-meter king over Ernie Candelario in athletics where Arneil Ferrera (hammer throw) and Henry Dagmil (long jump) set SEAG records.

Jaing went on to power the RP 4 x 400 relay team to victory even as Eduardo Buenavista bowed out as the country's long distance king in shame following his disqualification as winner of the 5,000 meters for illegally blocking a Thai runner, who was later declared first-placer.

Mikee Jaworski-Cojuangco, the Asian Games equestrian champion, was not in shape and fell off her horse, but still helped the RP riders led by Toni Leviste to win the team gold.

Tennis experienced a renaissance of sorts, both in medals won and in box office appeal, with Cecil Mamiit charming the crowd and winning two gold medals along with fellow Fil-Am Eric Taino.

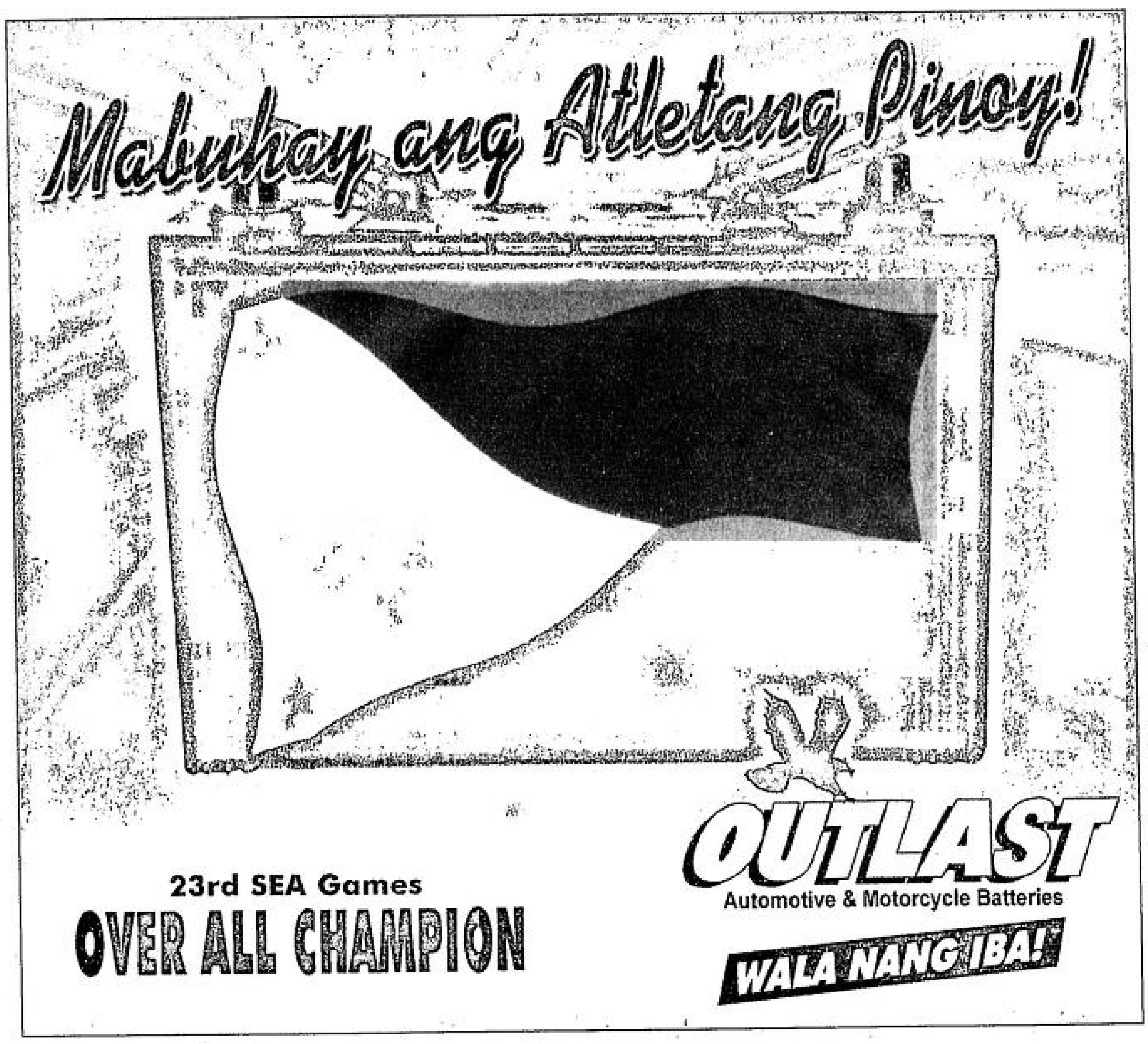
Though Thailand ace netter Paradorn Schrichipan decided to skip these Games in favor of money-rich events in the US and Europe, the victories of Mamiit and Co. were savored to the hilt by the crowd at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

But many of the Fil-foreign recruits failed to deliver although some of them performed in a manner that raised Filipino spirits like the "guest" booters who nearly boosted the men's football team to a first ever semifinal stint.

Also deserving credit were the traditional boat rowers, who pulled off a record six of six in their events and the muay thai bets won three times.

The most notable non-winner was Richard Gonzales,who gifted the Philippines its first-ever silver medal in table tennis. Gonzales also bagged the country's first bronze in the 1999 Games in Brunei and matched that effort this time by powering the men's team to third place.

Another medal, this time for inefficiency, went to the Main Press Center, which was severely criticized for churning out results at a snail's pace that left not only the foreign media agitated but the local ones as well. *Musong R. Castillo*



Mabuhay ang Atletang Pinoy!
23rd SEA Games
OVER ALL CHAMPION
OUTLAST
Automotive & Motorcycle Batteries
WALA NANG IBA!

DESPITE SEAG SUCCESS

PSC faces tough fight for budget

BACOLOD CITY—INSTEAD OF A BRIGHTER future after the Philippines claimed its first ever Southeast Asian Games overall crown, the Philippine Sports Commission faces the arduous task of urging the Department of Budget and Management to increase its budget for next year.

The POC's P107-million budget for this year should be retained for 2006, or each SEA Games gold that the RP delegation brought home will be converted to P1 million, said Rep. Monico Puentevella, who is a former Philippine Sports commissioner.

The DBM, headed by Secretary Romulo Neri, has proposed that only P27 million be allocated next year for the sports agency. The PSC earlier requested a P200 million budget.

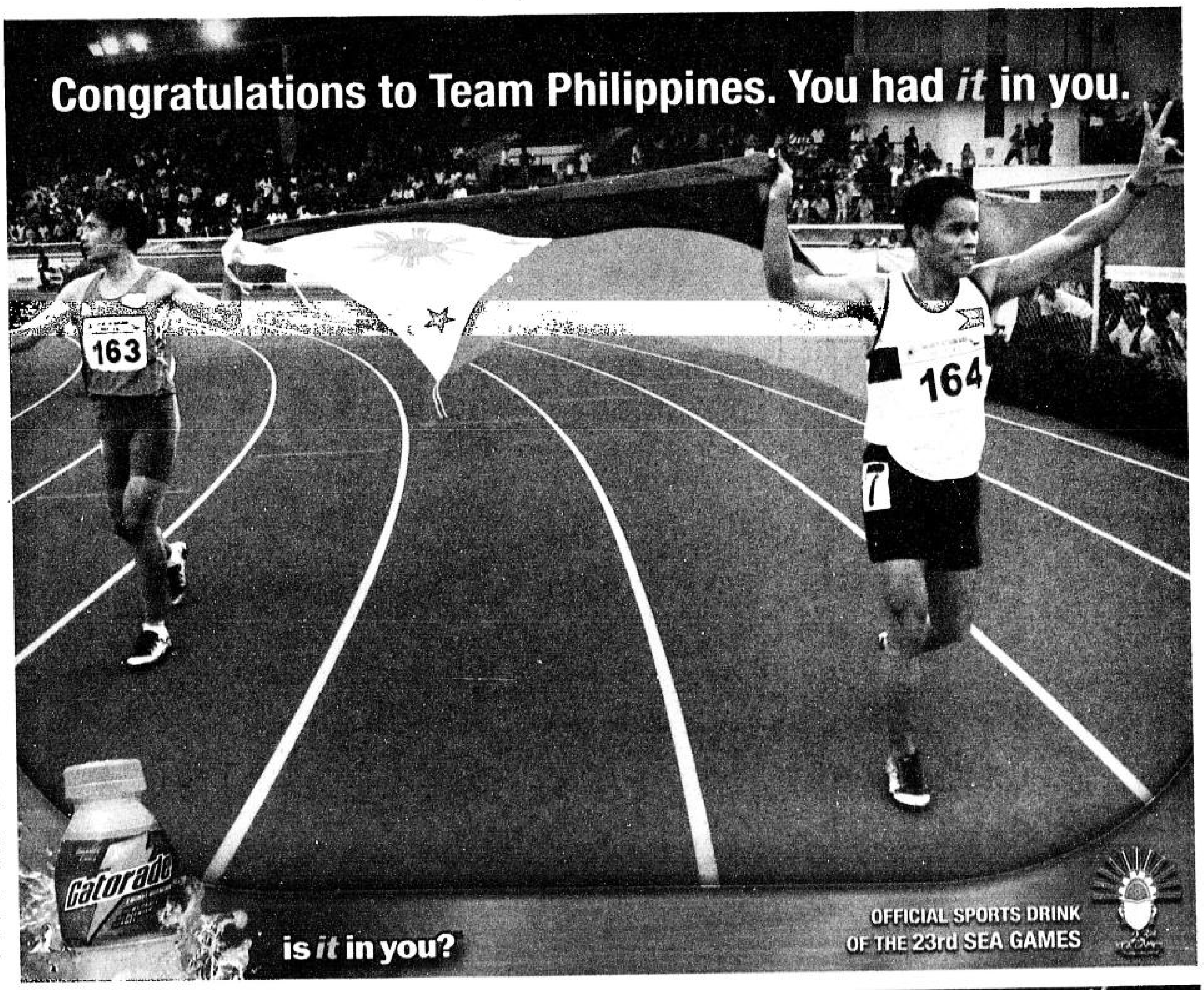
Despite the meager 2005 budget provided by the Department of Budget and Management, the Filipino athletes still performed creditably in the SEA Games.

"If it (DBM) would not increase the budget, it would be better that its officials and employees be the ones to compete in the next Asian and Olympic Games," said Puentevella, who will take up the PSC cause during a Congress session today.

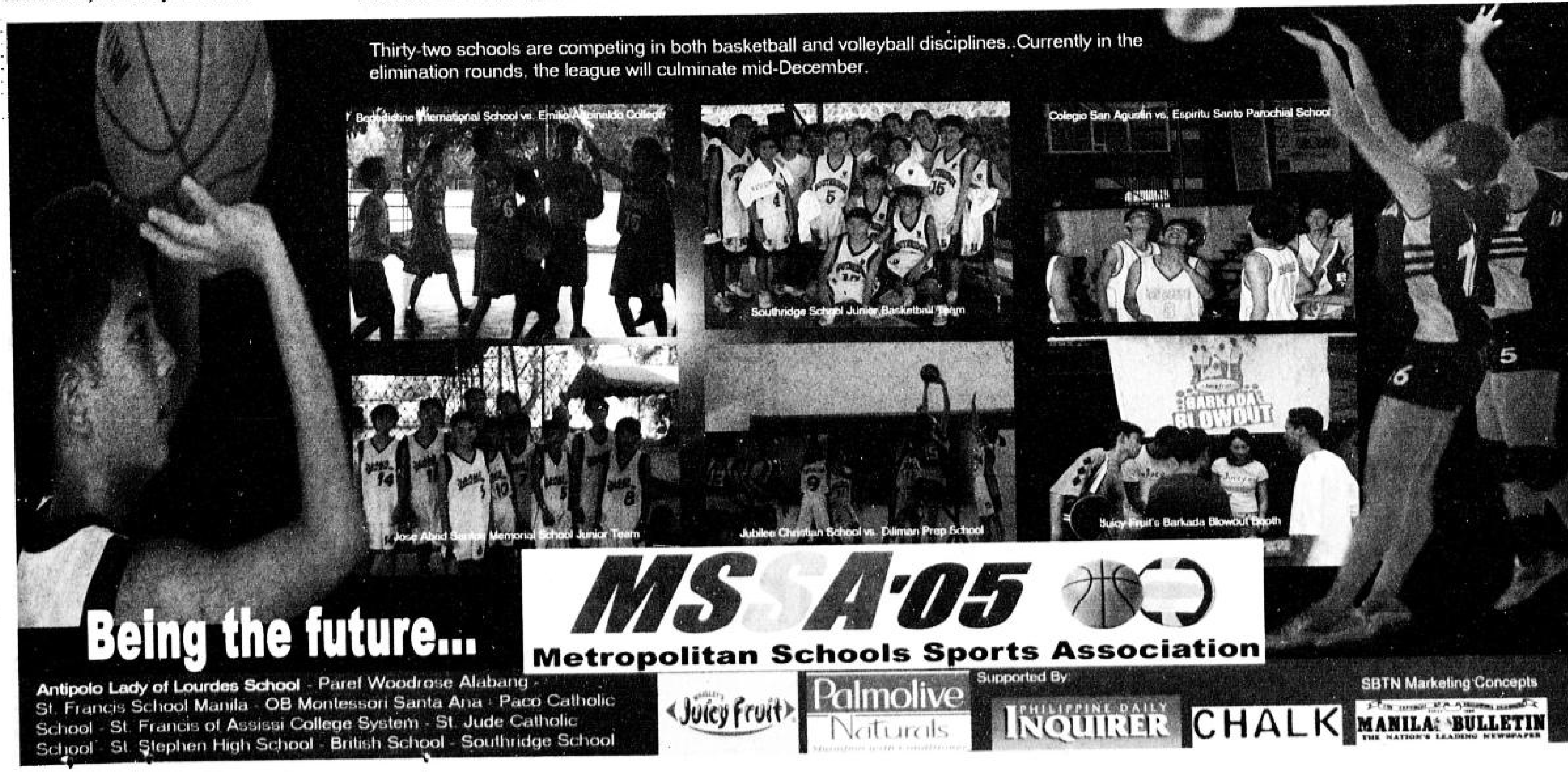
The 2006 Asian Games is set in Doha, Qatar, while Beijing, China, will be the host for the 2008 Olympic Games.

"It would be adding insult to injury for the athletes if the proposed budget for 2006 will not be revoked," said Puentevella.

The PSC, chaired by William "Butch" Ramirez, is responsible for providing financial assistance to the national sports associations for the development of athletes. *Christian Irl Tan, PDI Visayas Bureau*



Congratulations to Team Philippines. You had it in you.
163
164
Gatorade
is it in you?
OFFICIAL SPORTS DRINK OF THE 23rd SEA GAMES



Thirty-two schools are competing in both basketball and volleyball disciplines..Currently in the elimination rounds, the league will culminate mid-December.

Benedictine International School vs. Emilio Aguinaldo College
Southridge School Junior Basketball Team
Colegio San Agustin vs. Espiritu Santo Parochial School
Jose Abad Santos Memorial School Junior Team
Jubilee Christian School vs. Diliman Prep School
Juicy Fruit's Barkada Blowout Booth
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Antipolo Lady of Lourdes School - Paref Woodrose Alabang - St. Francis School Manila - OB Montessori Santa Ana - Paco Catholic School - St. Francis of Assissi College System - St. Jude Catholic School - St. Stephen High School - British School - Southridge School

Vicente bronze before the gold

ANGELES CITY—Aside from Ronald Lising, the gold medal winner in lawn bowls, another Filipino made the country proud in the competitions held at the Hidden Vale Sports Club here.

Mildred Vicente, a 34-year-old housewife nailed the bronze medal in the women's single division in petanque Friday night—the first ever medal won by a Filipino in the sport in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games.

Vicente's feat was not bad for someone who started training only in January, said Ronalyn Greenlees, skipper of the 12-member RP team in lawn bowls and petanque.

Greenlees encouraged the Romblon-born Vicente to try petanque, another genre of lawn bowling.

Playing against more seasoned athletes, Vicente said she survived the competitions by "loading myself with lots of confidence and prayers."

She placed third in the preliminaries, behind Thai and Cambodian bets.

"She's so happy because she still did well despite the brief training," said 13-year-old Kervin Vicente, the Filipino medalist's only son and towel boy during the competition.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Double trap split for Thai, S'pore bets

THAILAND AND SINGAPORE split the last two gold medals disputed on the final of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games shooting competition at the PNSA Clay Target Range.

Janejra Sirisongkram of Thailand handily took the gold in the women's individual double trap by shooting down 93 birds, while Zain Amat of Singapore prevailed in men's double trap with 173 birds.

Anamaria Garcia placed fourth in the women's division while Eric Ang finished fifth in the men's class as the Philippines suffered a medal shutout.

Vietnam's Hoang Thi Tuat was a far second in the women's trap with 81, two points clear of bronze medalist Chattaya Kitcharoen of Thailand.

Garcia scored 67 birds.

Puai Khamgasem of Thailand won silver in the men's trap with 165.

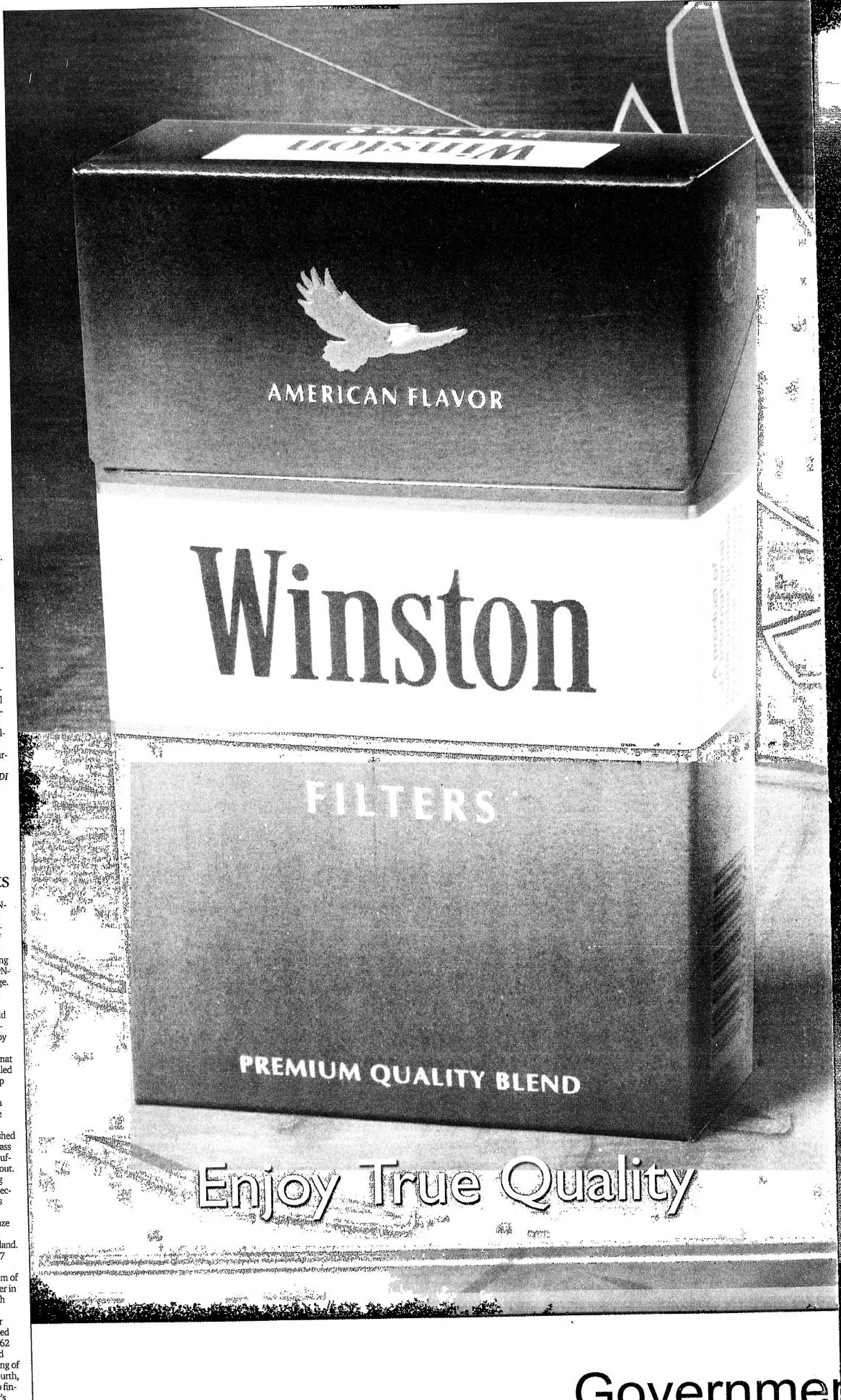
Malaysian Khor Seng Chye snatched the bronze with 162 birds while second seed Tan Tian Xiang of Malaysia fell to fourth, hitting only 30, to finish with 156. Ang's 143 was good for fifth.

"This is not my event. My event is single trap," said Ang, who won a bronze in men's individual single trap.

"You can not mix the single and the double trap."

Jethro Dionisio was dead last with 86 birds in the men's double trap.

JP Abcede



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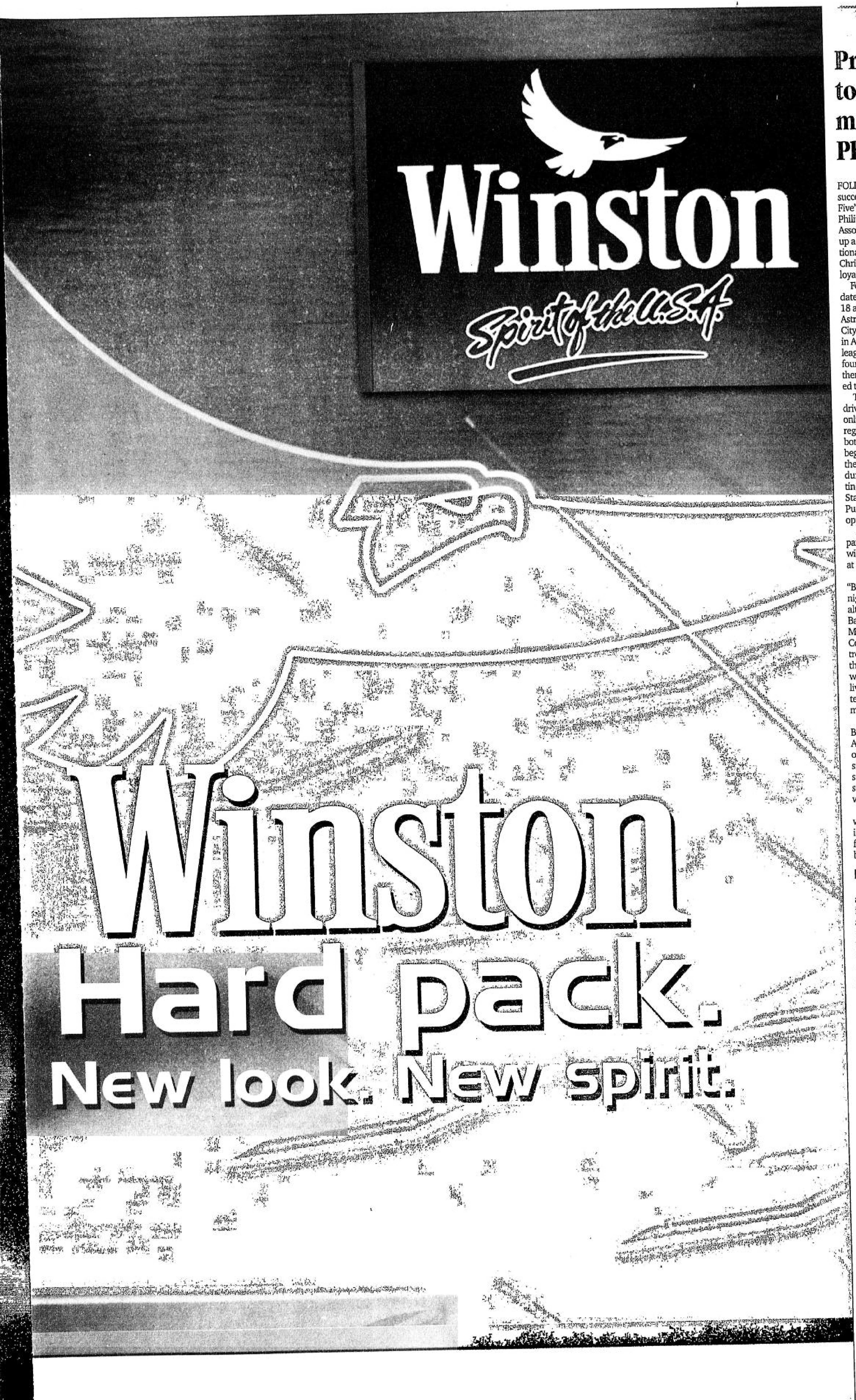
Cigarette smoking is da



nt Warning:
ngerous to your health.

Promos to lure more PBA fans

FOLLOWING THE success of its "Give Me Five" campaign, the Philippine Basketball Association has lined up a series of promotional ventures as Christmas treat to its loyal followers.

For four playing dates from Dec. 7 to 18 at both the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City and Ynares Center in Antipolo City, the league has planned four promotion themes for an intended target market.

The promotional drive, which applies only to patrons in the regular lower box of both playing venues, begins tomorrow with the "Family Blowout" during the games pitting Alaska against Sta. Lucia Realty and Purefoods Chunkee opposite Talk 'N Text.

A child in the company of both parents will be admitted for free at the Ynares Center.

On Friday, it's "Bonus for Employees" night as Sta. Lucia Realty battles Red Bull Barako and San Miguel Beer takes on Coca-Cola at the Astrodome. For every three employees who will watch the games live, one will be admitted free. Company ID must be presented.

The "Christmas Break Blowout" at the Astrodome on Dec. 14 offers one free admission for every three students of the same school. Entry requires valid school IDs.

The game schedule will have Sta. Lucia going up against Purefoods and Red Bull battling Air21.

For OFWs

Finally on Dec. 18 at the Ynares Center, it's the turn of Overseas Filipino Workers to be on the spotlight with the "Tribute to OFW Day." Recently arrived Filipinos overseas workers can watch the games between Coca-Cola and Sta. Lucia and Purefoods versus Air21 for free if they bring along with them a recently stamped passport.

Raffle prizes will be given out during the games.

"We wanted to reciprocate the support the PBA fans have been giving us the past years, most especially during this season," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala. "That's the reason the league has decided to come up with more promos."

Makati cock derby lures 40 entries

FORTY PARTICIPANTS have been invited to vie for about P300,000 in cash prizes in a special 4-cock derby at the Makati Coliseum on Thursday. Derby host Leo Magpantay will be assisted in the derby by WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. Meanwhile, the much-awaited "Pamaskong Salpukan 6-Cock Derby" will start on Monday, Dec. 12. Action continues on Dec. 14, 17, 19, 21, 26 and 28. The cockfighting spectacle requires an entry fee of P11,000 for a guaranteed prize of P3 million, plus a brand new Toyota Innova. For reservation of cockhouses and other inquiries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475

Thais string up 7th SEAG soccer title

By Cedelf P. Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—ONE OF THE LONGEST TITLE streaks in the Southeast Asian Games got another extension here Sunday night.

An awesome goal-scoring display by crowd favorite Teerathep Winothai boosted Thailand to a resounding 3-0 triumph over rival Vietnam in the finals of the men's football tournament at the Panaad Stadium here.

It was the Thais' seventh straight SEA Games crown in a run that dates back to the 17th edition of the Games in Singapore in 1993, while Vietnam was once again denied of its first crown since 1959. The Thais also humbled the Viets, 2-1, in the gold medal game before a hostile crowd of 40,000 in Ho Chi Minh City two years ago.

The Thais, who fashioned out the emphatic win in front of Deputy Prime Minister Suwat Liptapanlop, said their victory was a gift to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who celebrated his 78th birthday Monday.

Going on attack-mode right from the get-go, Thailand broke through in the 43rd minute as Winothai's volley found the back of the net, after a frenetic goalmouth scramble.

Winothai's last two goals were actually products of the brilliant play at midfield by Dathsakorn Thonglao and the bristling runs by fellow striker Ekephan Inthasen, whose pass was converted into an easy goal by Winothai in the 76th minute.

The 20-year-old Winothai, who has won many admirers here for his looks and skills, got his hat-trick seven minutes from time, again getting a nifty feed from Inthasen inside the box, then beating the Viet keeper.

"This win is a testament of our teamwork," said Winothai, who emerged as one of the tournament's top scorers with five goals to his credit.

Vietnam's Australian coach Alfred Riedl said Teerathep and Enthasen overwhelmed the defense.

"There was no weak point for them," he said. "We were under pressure from them for 90 minutes."

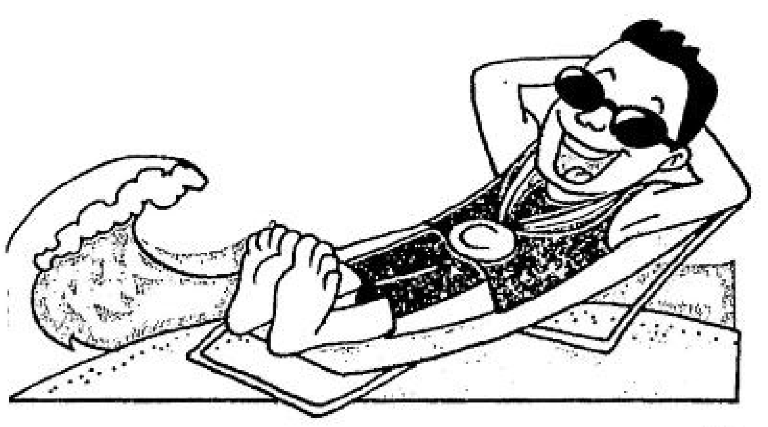
Thailand's football win capped the SEAG action in Bacolod which was formally closed by Rep. Monico Puentevella at the Panaad Sunday night in a ceremony highlighted by a fireworks display.

Official bottled water of the 23rd SEA Games.
SUMMIT Reach for it.

Filipino Gold Medalists

AQUATICS-DIVING
—Shiela Mae Perez, W 1M individual springboard
—Shiela Mae Perez, W 3M individual springboard
—Niño Carog and Zardo Domenios, M 3M synchronized springboard
—Cesell Domenios and Shiela Mae Perez, W 3M synchronized springboard
—Kevin Kong and Ryan Fabriga, M 10M synchronized platform
AQUATICS-SWIMMING
—Miguel Mendoza, M 1500M freestyle
—Miguel Molina, M 200M breaststroke
—Miguel Molina, M 200M individual medley
—Miguel Molina, M 400M individual medley
ARCHERY
—Amaya Paz, W individual compound
—Jennifer Chan, Amaya Paz, Joann Tabañag and Abbigail Tindugan, W team compound
—Marvin Cordero, Christian Cubilla, Mark Javier and Florante Matan, M team recurve
ARNIS
—Anna Joy Fernandez, W full contact -52Kg
—Catherine Ballenas, Aireen Parong and Rochelle Quirol, W team anyo
—Kelvin Celis, Nathan Ben Dominguez and Glenn Llamador, M team anyo
ATHLETICS
—Jimar Aing, M 400M
—Henry Dagmil, M long jump
—Arniel Ferrera, M hammer throw
—Danilo Fresnido, M javelin throw
—Rene Herrera, M 3000M steeplechase
—Mercedita Manipol, W 10000M
—Christabel Martes, W marathon
—Marestella Torres, W long jump
—Ernie Candelario, Jimar Aing, Julius Nierras and Kashus Perona, M 4x400M relay
BASEBALL
—Men's team
BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER
—Ronato Alcano, M 15-ball rotation singles
—Rubilen Amit, W 8-ball singles
—Rubilen Amit, W 9-ball singles
—Alex Pagulayan, M 8-ball singles
—Ronato Alcano and Leonardo Andam, M 15-ball rotation doubles
—Lee Vann Corteza and Antonio Gabica, M 8-ball doubles
—Dennis Orcollo and Alex Pagulayan, M 9-ball doubles
—Leonardo Andam, Joven Alba, Alex Pagulayan and Felipe Tauro Jr., M snooker team
BODYBUILDING
—Michael Borenaga, M bantamweight
—Alfredo Trazona Jr., M welterweight
BOWLING
—Liza Clutario, W masters
—Markwin Tee, M masters
—Ma. Cecilia Yap, W singles
—Ernesto Gatchalian and Christian Jan Suarez, M doubles
BOXING
—Annie Albania, W flyweight
—Alice Kate Aparri, W pinweight
—Genebert Basadre, M lightweight
—Jouvilet Chilem, W bantamweight
—Juanito Magliquian Jr., M pinweight
—Mitchel Martinez, W lightweight
—Harry Tañamor, M light flyweight
—Joan Tipon, M bantamweight
CYCLING
—Marites Bitbit, W cross-country MTB
—Alfie Catalan, M 4Km individual pursuit
DANCESPORT
—Michael Mendoza and Belinda Adora, Latin American dance
—Rico Rosima and Filomena Salvador, standard dance
EQUESTRIAN
—Joker Arroyo, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, Toni Leviste and Juan Ramon Lanza, team show jumping
FENCING
—Melly Angeles, W individual epee
—Walbert Mendoza, M individual sabre
—Veena Tessa Nuestro, W individual foil
—Denver Atienza, Rolando Canlas Jr., Ramil Endriano and Emerson Segui, M team foil
—Richard Gomez, Armando Vernal, Avelino Victorino Jr. and Wilfredo Vizcayno Jr., M team epee
GOLF
—Juvic Pagunsan, M individual
—Marvin Dumandan, Jay Bayron, Michael Bibat and Juvic Pagunsan, M team
GYMNASTICS
—Roel Ramirez, M individual artistic gymnastics floor exercises
—Roel Ramirez, M individual artistic gymnastics vault
JUDO
—John Baylon, M -81Kg
—Helen Dawa, W -45Kg
—Gilbert Ramirez, M -73Kg
—Karen Ann Solomon, W -70Kg
KARATE-DO
—Gretchen Malalad, W individual kumite +60Kg
—Marna Pabillore, W individual kumite -53Kg
—Nelson Pacalso, M individual kumite -65Kg
LAWN BOWLS
—Ronald Lising, M singles
MUAY
—Roland Claro, M lightweight
—Victoria Agbayani and Cristina Custodio, W Wai Kru 54-57Kg
—Claire Cadampog and Lianne Flameno, W Wai Kru 51-54Kg
PENCAK SILAT
—Marniel Dimla, M class F 70-75Kg
ROWING
—Benjamin Tolentino Jr., M lightweight single sculls
—Jose Rodriguez and Benjamin Tolentino Jr., M coxless pairs
—Alvin Amposta and Benjamin Tolentino Jr., M lightweight doubles scull
SAILING
—German Paz, M boardsailing Olympic class
SHOOTING
—Juanito Angeles, M practical shotgun
—Paul Brian Rosario, M individual skeet
—Patricio Bernardo, Darius Alex Hizon and Paul Brian Rosario, M team skeet
SOFTBALL
—Men's team
—Women's team
TAEKWONDO
—Kirstie Elaine Alora, W featherweight
—Donald David Geisler, M lightweight
—Tshomlee Go, M bantamweight
—John Paul Lizardo, M finweight
—Mary Antoinette Rivero, W lightweight
—Esther Marie Singson, W bantamweight
TENNIS
—Cecil Mamiit, M singles
—Eric Taino and Riza Zalameda, mixed doubles
—Johnny Arcilla, Cecil Mamiit, Eric Taino and Patrick John Tierro, M team
TRADITIONAL BOAT RACE
—M 1000M 10A-Side team
—M 1000M 20A-Side team
—W 1000M 10A-Side team
—M 500M 10A-Side team
—M 500M 20A-Side team
—W 500M 10A-Side team
WRESTLING
—Jimmy Angana, M 60-66Kg
—Gemma Silverio, W 55-59Kg
—Marcus Valda, M 84-96Kg
—Cristina Villanueva, W 48-51Kg
—Francis Villanueva, M 96-120Kg
WUSHU
—Rene Catalan, M sanshou 48Kg
—Edward Folayang, M sanshou 70Kg
—Pedro Quina, M taolu-nanquan
—Rhea May Rifani, W sanshou 52Kg
—Arvin Ting, M taolu-daoshu
—Vicky Ting, W taolu-jianshu
—Willy Wang, M taolu-jianshu
—Willy Wang, M taolu-qiangshu
—Aida Yang, W taolu-daoshu
—Richard Ng and Lester Pimentel, M taolu-duilian
—Vicky Ting and Aida Yang, W taolu-duilian
Compiled by: Sarah Morales

After the battles, it's vacation time for gold medalists



By Leila B. Salaverria

FOR POWERING THE PHILIPPINES to its first ever overall title in the Southeast Asian Games, all Filipino gold medalists will receive vacation packages courtesy of the Philippine Tourism Authority.

The Filipino champions have a choice of either a trip to Ifugao province to see the world-renowned Banaue Rice Terraces, or to San Fabian, Pangasinan, to enjoy the PTA Beach Resort.

Under the packages announced by the PTA yesterday, the athletes can use for free the agency's facilities, which include the Presidential Rest House in San Fabian and the Banaue Hotel and Youth Hostel in Ifugao.

The vacation packages are good for three days and two nights, and the athletes are allowed to bring with them two family members each.

PTA General Manager Robert Dean Barbers said they are offering the free vacation in appreciation of the exceptional performances of the Filipino athletes in the biennial Games.

"The PTA, in recognition of the hard work, diligence and perseverance of our Filipino athletes and for having given honor and pride to our countrymen, would like to pay tribute to them and offer our tourist entities for their much needed rest and relaxation together with their loved ones," Barbers said in a statement.

The PTA chief also said the free trips were an early Christmas gift to the athletes. The athletes could avail themselves of the packages up to January.

"PTA's bonus travel bonanza will definitely add to the monetary windfall that our athletes would be getting from the government for their triumphant endeavor in the SEA Games," Barbers said. "Christmas this year will be very special for these athletes."

Barbers also encouraged the athletes and delegates of the participating countries to extend their stay in the Philippines so they can enjoy the country's tourist draws. He said they would be given discounts in most of the tourist attractions here.

Fil-Am romance and more

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

BAGUIO CITY—SOMEWHAT LOST IN THE din of the 23rd SEA Games is the Fil-Am Golf Championship.

Now holding its 56th edition, the tournament that keeps making the Guinness Book of World Records in the area of the most number of participants entered in a golf event held anywhere in the world has drawn 1,060 players this time—yet another record. There were 1,040 players last year.

Eighty-six teams were also accepted this year—yet another record. There were 76 last year.

"The tournament keeps growing every year since its birth in 1949," said Pigeon Lobien, the associate editor of Cordillera Today, Baguio City's most independent newspaper.

Lobien, who has followed this tournament religiously the last 10 years, also writes for The Daily Tribune, the fightingest broadsheet nationwide.

"The Fil-Am has always been good for the city," said Lobien, covering his 11th Fil-Am. "It is synonymous to Baguio City. Tourism in the city shoots up each time it's with us. Definitely, the Fil-Am is a boon to our city."

From The Country Club in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, I motored to this city at the break of dawn yesterday to renew my romance with the Fil-Am event and, of course, with the Baguio Country Club.

Like Lobien, I've also followed the Fil-Am like sugar to an ant. Since I started covering it nearly 20 years ago, there was no stopping.

The last five years or so even added a new twist to the romance: I did officiating in the distinguished company of Taby "Insan" Tabaniag, Butch Brodette, Jake P. Ayson and the departed Toots Aquino.

My gratitude for this added dimension to my career goes to Anthony de Leon, the tireless general manager of the Baguio Country Club. Anthony has never wavered in his resolve to have us officiate the Fil-Am from 2002 onwards, a tradition started by Shean Bedi of Camp John Hay in 2001.

Refereeing in golf isn't fun but still, I like it. The challenge is already the thrill.

I headed the rules committee of the just-ended SEA Games golf competition and I've never been happier in my life. Was I glad I didn't disappoint the confidence entrusted to me by Vice Admiral Louie Fernandez, the vice chair of the organizing committee. And if I may breast-beat a little, our rules committee quartet that included Jake Ayson, Caloy Coscolluela and Jack Imperial did a virtual walk in the park in our officiating duties during the 11-nation golf competitions. Thanks, fellas, and congratulations for a job well done.

And since we are still in the pat-in-the-back mode amid our glorious overall victory—a first in the SEA Games—here's to Juvic Pagunsan for winning the men's individual golf gold in smashing fashion, firing sub-par rounds every day for four days for a 13 under-par total at the par-70 The Country Club (69-69-64-65). Also to Jay Bayron, Marvin Dumandan and Michael Bibat for winning the team gold with Juvic, Jayvie Agojo (women's individual silver) and the RP women's squad (team silver) composed of Jayvie, Frances Bondad and Anya Tanpinco.

More than the medals you won was the fighting spirit and the sportsmanlike conduct you exhibited during the competitions.

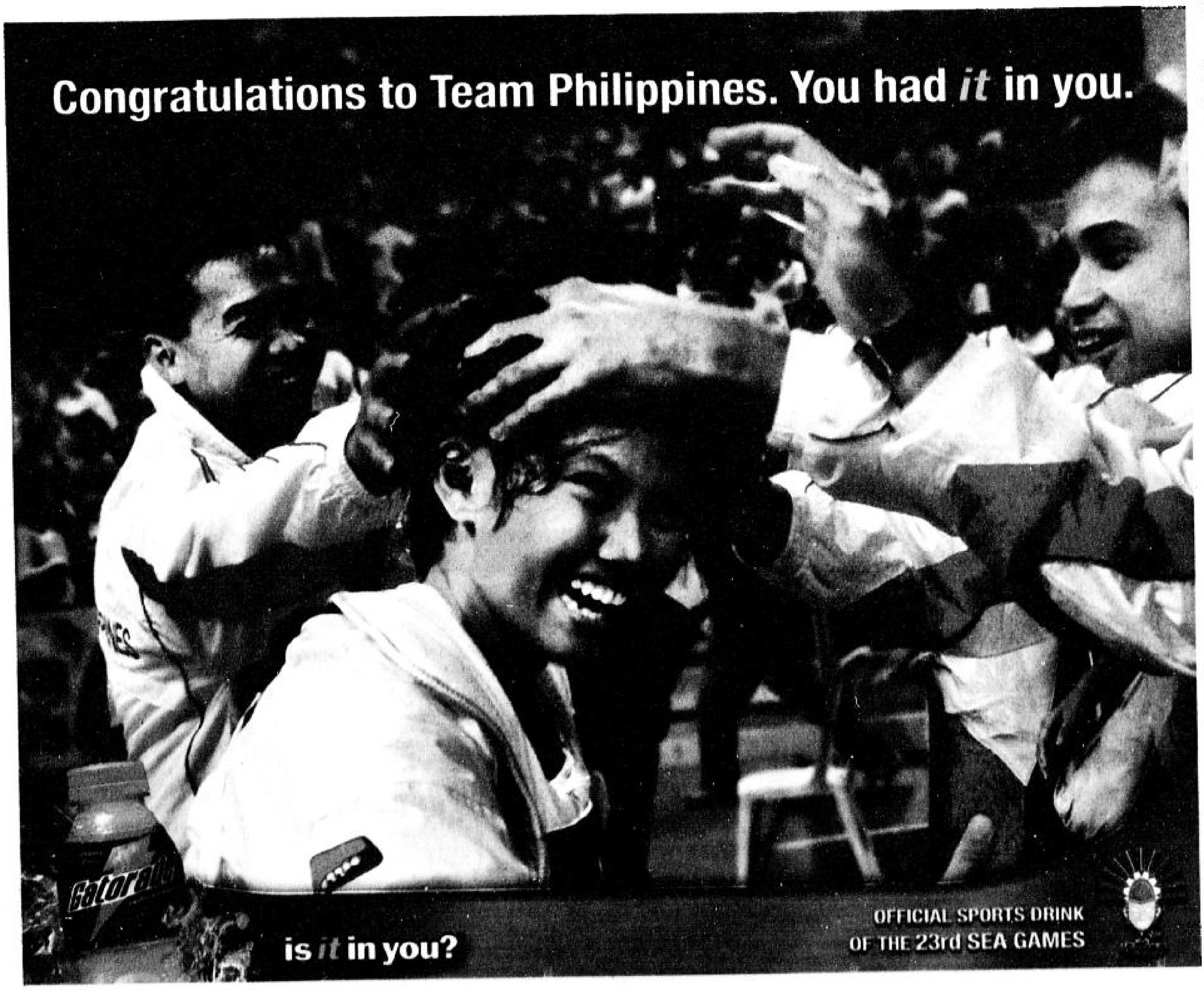
You were humble in victory—the one trait much lacking in many of our athletes from around the world today.

* * *

FASTBREAK. Wo Rosete of Smart's Talk 'N Text was a big, big help in the communications department regarding my duties as golf referee during the SEA Games. He was likewise instrumental in the success of my coverage of the recent Tokyo Motor Show in Japan and the HSBC Champions golf tournament in Shanghai, China. May your tribe increase, Mr. Wo.

* * *

E-mail: menju@pldtdsl.net


Congratulations to Team Philippines. You had *it* in you.
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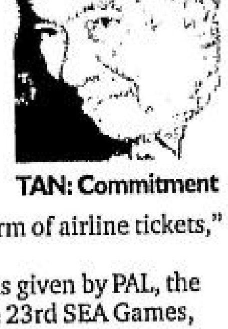
is *it* in you?

Philsoc hails PAL for SEAG assistance

PHILIPPINE SEA GAMES (Philsoc) president and CEO Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. has commended Philippine Airlines and the Lucio Tan Group of Companies for extending P50 million worth of goods and services for the athletes and officials who participated in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games.


TAN: Commitment

"The smooth conduct of the 23rd SEA Games would not be possible without the invaluable support of the Lucio Tan Group of Companies, particularly PAL, which provided the basic logistical support in the form of airline tickets," said Cojuangco.

Major support was given by PAL, the official airline of the 23rd SEA Games, through P30 million worth of tickets to regional and domestic points, including Bacolod and Cebu, for the officials of delegations of participating countries.

Century Park Hotel, the Games' Official Hotel, provided 290 rooms and P3 million worth of signing privileges; while Asia Brewery gave one million bottles of Summit distilled water.

PAL's extensive support to the 23rd SEA Games forms part of the airline's long advocacy for sports development, as manifested by its sponsorship of the annual PAL Interclub Golf Tournament, the first Philippine climb to Mount Everest in 2007 and the PAL Inter-Sports Tournament.

Bata Reyes bags ₱10.8M in US tilt

From page A19

lion event at the expense of compatriot Marlon "Marvelous" Manalo, 8-4.

Another Filipino pool idol, Francisco Bustamante dealt Manalo his first loss, 8-7.

Bustamante, however, was beaten by Finnish Mika "The Iceman" Immonen, 3-8, to bow out of title contention in the event which guarantees each participant $10,000 (about P540,000).

After losing to lesser lights in various tournaments, Reyes underwent laser eye surgery recently to improve his vision. And it has proven to be beneficial to his game.

Ernesto Fajardo, Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BSCP) president lauded the performance of the Philippine bets.

"What could I asked for, Reyes, Bustamante and Manalo finished 1-2-3 in the International Pool Tour in Orlando, Florida.

Sportsman Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, Bata and Djangos' long-time benefactor, said: " I'm proud of the boys. They inspire the whole nation with their magnificent performance abroad."

Last October, US-based Santos Sambajon, a native of Macalelon, Quezon, also became an instant millionaire after securing his biggest pay check of $73,500 in winning the 2005 Skins Billiards Championship Crown at Resorts Atlantic City Atlantic City in New Jersey. *Marlon Bernardino*

Thailand lifters take overall title; RP settles for 4 medals

BACOLOD CITY—THAILAND FINISHED ITS campaign with six gold and two silver medals to claim the overall championship of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games weightlifting competition at the Bacolod Convention Plaza here.

The Thai female lifters, spearheaded by Olympic gold medalist Pawina Thongsuk, brought home four gold medals even as Nissara Lohajeerang failed to finish in the top three of the women's 75 kg Sunday.

Khunchai Nuchpum of Thailand took the gold in the men's 94 kg after a 346 kg total in the snatch and clean-and-jerk, while compatriot Suthiphon Wathanakasikam also accumulated 346 kg for the men's 105 kg gold.

Host Philippines ended its bid with four medals after 1997 SEAG gold medalist Alvin Delos Santos snared the bronze Sunday with a total of 325 kg in the men's 105 kg.

"I'm very satisfied with the performance of my athletes because they surpassed their personal bests," national coach Ramonito Solis said.

Zamboanga native Alfonsito Aldanete, 32, took the silver medal in the men's 94 kg, while Renante Briones grabbed a bronze in the 105 kg.

Cecilia Atilano bagged the lone medal for the Filipina lifters after registering a 187 kg total in the 63 kg, good enough for bronze.

The Philippines also improved from its single medal haul—a bronze— in the 2003 SEA Games in Vietnam that was achieved by Delos Santos.

Christian Irl Tan, PDI Visayas Bureau

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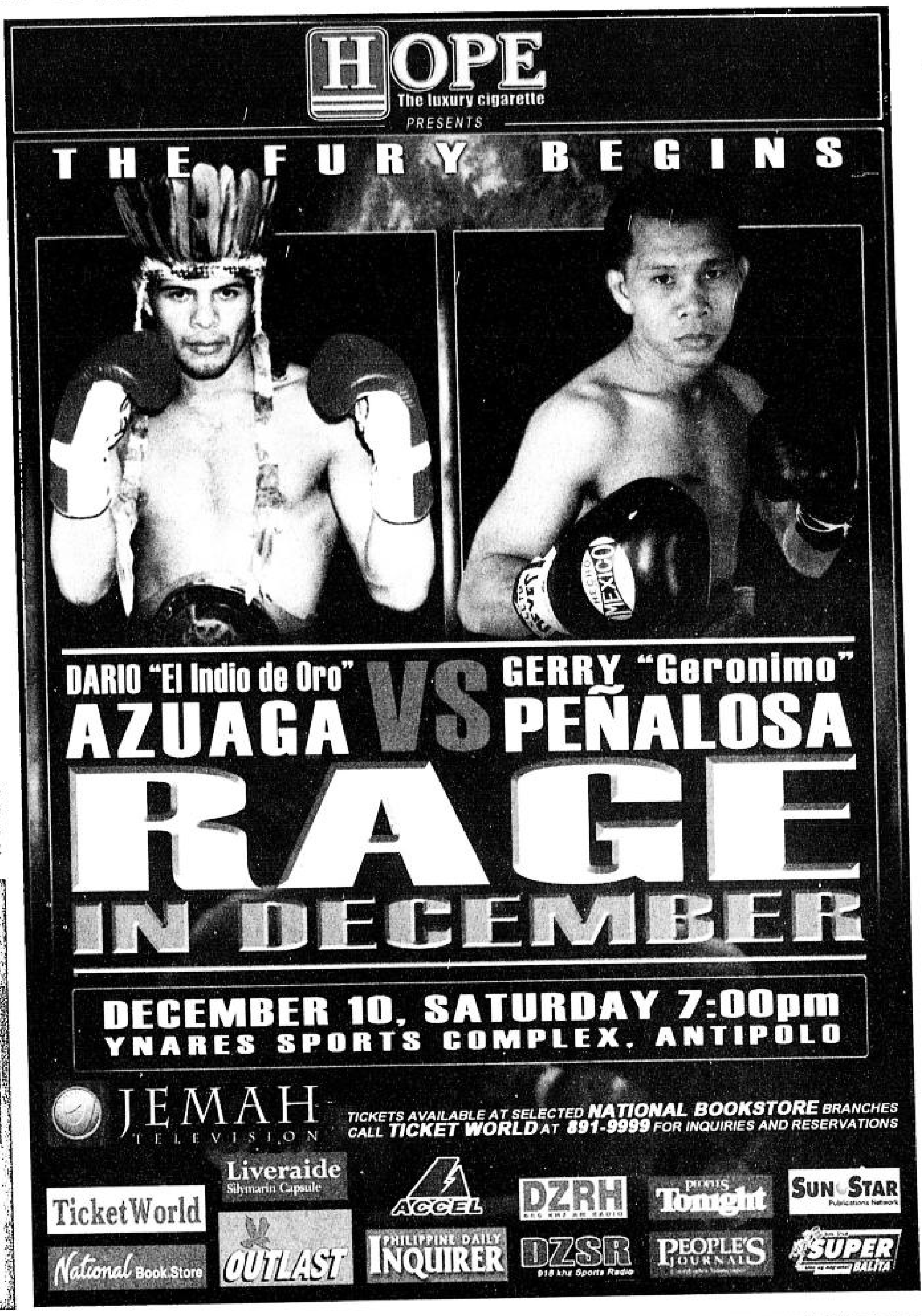
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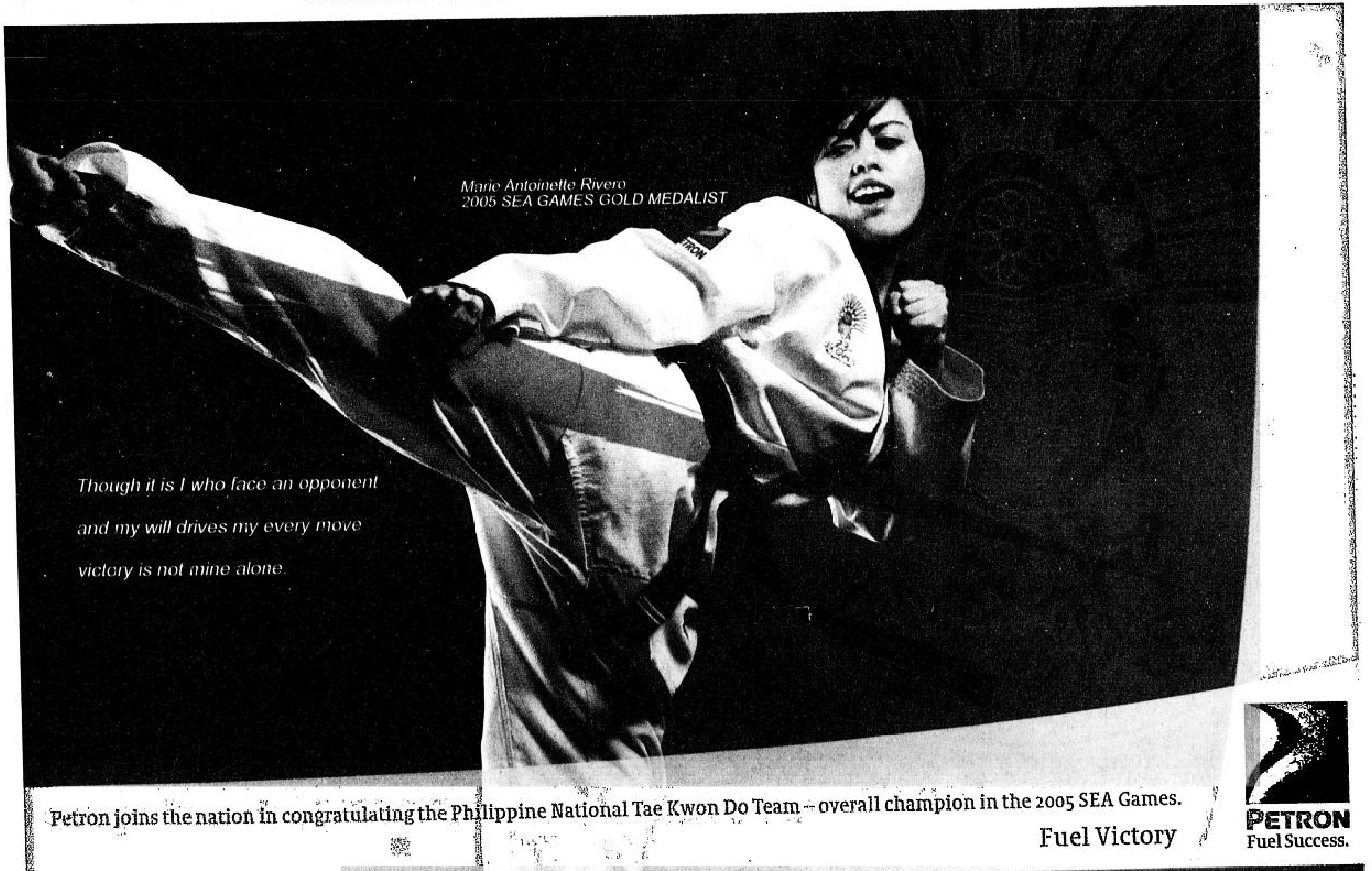

Marie Antoinette Rivero
2005 SEA GAMES GOLD MEDALIST
Though it is I who face an opponent
and my will drives my every move
victory is not mine alone.

Petron joins the nation in congratulating the Philippine National Tae Kwon Do Team – overall champion in the 2005 SEA Games.

Fuel Victory

PETRON
Fuel Success.

Top row ([illegible]) [illegible] Solis, D. Geisler, N.Veneracion, J. Morales, S. [illegible] vero, J. Figueroa, M. Alejandrino. Bottom [illegible]

Philippine Jins Overall Champions in 2005 SEA Games

With a total medal tally of six golds, five silvers and a bronze, the Petron Philippine National Tae Kwon Do Team bagged the overall championship in this year's SEA Games held in Manila.

The gold medalists include John Paul Lizardo, Tshomlee Go; Donald David Geisler III, Esther Marie Singson, Kerstin Elaine Alora, and Marie Antoinette Rivero. Silver medalists are Dax Alberto Morfe, Michael Alejandrino, Alexander Briones, Veronica Domingo and Criselda Roxas, while the bronze medal went to Sally Solis.

Completing the line-up of the championship team are Jeffrey Figueroa, Lorraine Catalan, Eunice Alora and Manuel Rivero, Jr., together with the coaching staff composed of Stephen Fernandez, Noel Veneracion, Jobet Morales, Roberto Cruz, Rocky Samson and Sebastian Ripol.

This year's medal haul is the team's largest since the 1991 SEA Games which was also held in Manila.

Davis lifts Celtics past Knicks

NEW YORK—RICKY DAVIS MADE TWO FREE throws with 8.7 seconds remaining to cap a 27-point haul that guided the Boston Celtics to a first road win of the season, a 102-99 victory over the New York Knicks on Sunday.

Paul Pierce had 28 points, nine rebounds and seven assists to lead the Celtics, who improved to 7-9 while winning for the first time on the road at their fifth attempt.

"We couldn't have asked for a better win," Boston coach Doc Rivers said.

New York had one last chance to tie the game after Davis' free throws but Nate Robinson missed a triple on the final play of the game.

Delonte West added 17 points for the Celtics, who won despite allowing the Knicks to go to the line 46 times but making just 35 of those tries.

Other results: Phoenix Suns 112, Atlanta Hawks 94; Seattle SuperSonics 107, Indiana Pacers 102; Minnesota Timberwolves 85, Sacramento Kings 77; Utah Jazz 98, Portland Trail Blazers 93; LA Lakers 99, Charlotte Bobcats 98. Reuters

Furyk wins 4-way playoff, takes $1.2M

SUN CITY, SOUTH AFRICA—JIM Furyk chipped in for birdie on the second extra hole of a sudden-death playoff to win the 25th Sun City Golf Challenge at the Gary Player Country Club on Sunday.

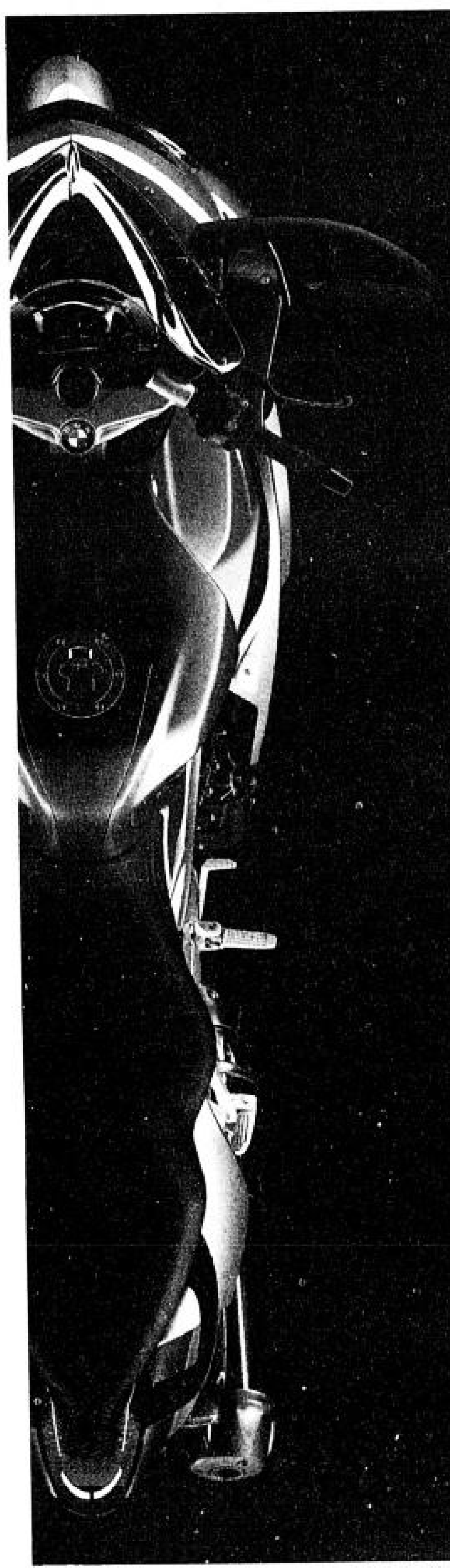
American Furyk holed out from 15 feet from just off the back of the green at the par-four 18th, edging out Briton Darren Clarke and Australia's Adam Scott to capture the $1.2 million first prize.

Four players, including 2004 winner Retief Goosen, had contested the playoff after completing the 72 holes of regulation in six-under 282.

The world No. 4 South African went out on the first extra hole after a bogey.

"It's been a year of close calls and I've lost two playoffs," a beaming Furyk said. "Padraig Harrington holed a 70-footer on 18 to beat me by one, so there were a lot of times when I walked off the 18th green disappointed this year."

Furyk, who started the day at six under and one stroke behind leaders Tim Clark of South Africa, Argentine Angel Cabrera and Scott, carded a final-round 72. Scott shot 73 and Goosen 72. *Reuters*



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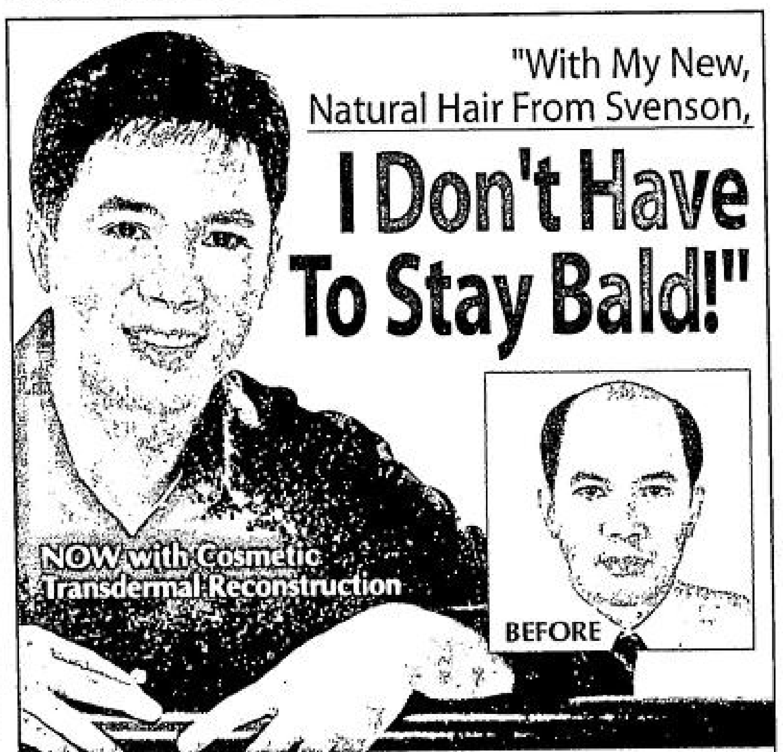
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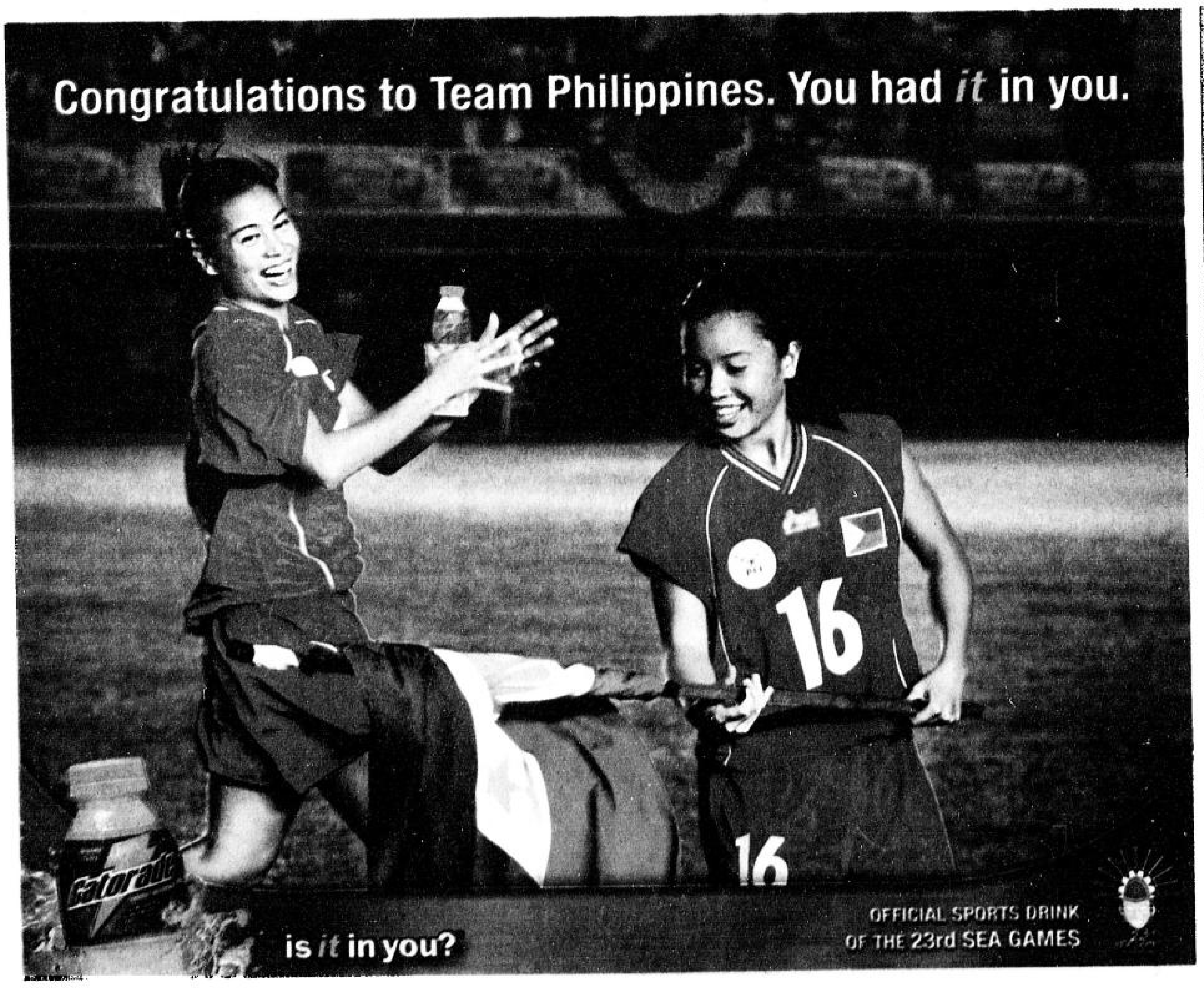
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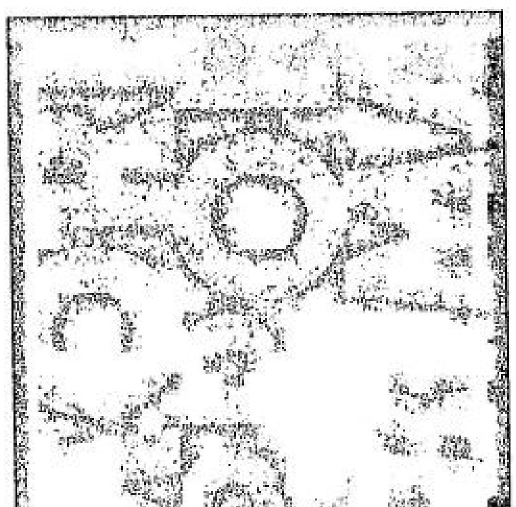

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Desperately seeking Brocka

'Serious preservation problem' makes modern Pinoy classics inaccessible

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AT THE TORINO INTERNAtional Film Festival, held in the northern Italian town from Nov. 11 to 19, six Lino Brocka masterpieces were screened, along with the newer works of fellow Pinoys Lav Diaz and Jon Red.

The screenings of the Filipino films were organized by Roger Garcia, the festival's program consultant for Asia.

Hong Kong-born and US-based (half-Portuguese) Garcia remains a staunch supporter of Pinoy movies, in spite of many obstacles along the way.

At the time of his nth visit to the Philippines last August, he had encountered much difficulty in gathering the six titles for Torino's Brocka retrospective—"Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang," "Maynila, Sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag," "Insiang," "Ina, Kapatid, Anak," "Bona" and "Bayan Ko: Kapit sa Patalim."

LINO Brocka at work on "Bona" in 1978

Global treasure hunt

Garcia found only two of the movies in Manila—a 35mm copy of "Tinimbang" from the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) and a DVD copy of "Ina, Kapatid" from Tony Gloria of Unitel. The CCP had acquired its copy from the British Film Institute, while Unitel's Unico Entertainment is releasing several Brocka classics on DVD, available online (www.cinefilipino.com).

Although the CCP has some Brocka prints, some had no subtitles or were in fragile or "unshowable condition," Garcia said. "Fortunately, Gloria is doing digital restoration work."

It took "lengthy research," nothing short of a global treasure hunt, before Garcia succeeded in completing the Brocka lineup.

Garcia located the rest of the titles at the Cinematheque Française in France, with the help of Pierre Rissient and Alain Jalladeau. Rissient is the same Frenchman who introduced Brocka to the world by bringing "Insiang" to Cannes in 1978. Jalladeau, director of the Festival des 3 Continents in Nantes, France, has long championed Brocka's works.

"There is no longer a copy of Brocka's 'Angela Markado,' 1983 Best Film winner in Nantes," Garcia said.

A panel discussion held in Torino, with Rissient, Jalladeau and Garcia as speakers, underscored the "sorry state of affairs in film preservation."

Also an active participant in the Torino conference was Pascuala A. Brosnar, a Peta-trained actress who's now married to an Italian and based in Europe. With the screen name Paz Brosas, she acted in Brocka classics like "Tinimbang" and "Ina, Kapatid." She credited Brocka for her growth as an actress and said "he now watches over me in my work, running a children's theater group in Torino."

On the Torino website, film fest organizers noted that Brocka "does not need rediscovering, but his films have been absent from the screen for many years . . . At the moment, his films are inaccessible due to serious conservation problems."

Critical conscience

The Torino forum highlighted the importance of Brocka's films because they "continue to be a reference point (albeit not a model) for new generations of Filipino filmmakers ... Lav Diaz ... considers him a sort of critical conscience."

Garcia concurred, describing Brocka's oeuvre as "a cinema of opposition that challenges the state of things and paints a terrible picture of a society in total desperation."

Declared the Torino website: Brocka's legacy "is a cinema in open conflict with the Censors and in internal conflict with the industry—a cinema that is radical and popular at the same time."

Pretty Baby Cassy

CASSY Legaspi is a pint-sized but certified *fashionista*, according to her parents, Carmina Villaroel and Zoren Legaspi. "She's very conscious of her looks. She loves mimicking shampoo commercial models. She likes to wear heart-shaped things —and she's a fool for pink!" says Carmina. The first time mother and daughter chanced upon a kiddie accessories shop at the Podium called Pinkbox, Carmina recalls, they both flipped. Now the girl is the store's official endorser—at the ripe old age of 4!

Reader defends Plinky's ex-BF

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

IN MY PREVIOUS COLUMN, I promised to let you in on more details about **Plinky Recto**'s case vs her former partner, but at press time Plinky and I have not spoken yet. As soon as we do, I will give you a blow-by-blow account (of the blows she endured?). For now, I'm giving way to an e-mail of a reader who comes in defense of the "powerful ex-lover" of Plinky.

All in the name of balanced and fair reporting.

Hi Dolly Ann,

I'm one of the avid readers of your column and I had the wonderful opportunity to meet you years back through some of our common Ilonggo friends.

Although I wasn't planning on writing you, the Plinky Recto issue caught my attention. Given your obvious sentiments in today's column, I decided to [share with you] some pieces of information which, I am certain, will help you exercise utmost fairness in your coming reports.

Before doing so, I just want to make it clear that I am in no way related to any of the parties concerned. Nor was I paid, influenced or, worse, threatened to write this. I just feel that there are some matters way beyond the public's knowledge—things that should be made public, if only to give this whole Plinky-Powerful Man saga much needed balance and credibility.

Ask the help

FIRST, I suggest that you interview the former midwives, maids, drivers and other helpers who have left Plinky's household because of her fits of hysteria. And I urge you to verify this: she shouts at people, regardless of who's in front of them—outside the gate, in the grocery, etc. She treats her maids like trash and talks to them like they're dirt. Powerful Man *hated* this. He used to walk out on her every time she had a violent ((I mean *raging*) mood swing. Most deplorable of all (and again, there are people only too willing to support this statement) is that nobody—and I mean nobody—is spared from her wrath. She hits her own child with any kitchen utensil she can get hold of. Ask the *yaya*.

Second, I urge you to get copies of the court records—affidavits, etc. She keeps claiming she only wants him out of her life. How come she's asking for P4 million, plus P300,000 monthly allowance for the child? For heaven's sake, he's only 14 months old. What will a little boy do with that much money?

The court records will also show checks issued to her by the ex-lover in shocking amounts used to: 1) finance her Pilates in Mexico (he even went with her); 2) finance her Pilates studios that are now losing money; and 3) renovate her house in Loyola Heights (ask the neighbors, he had her house walled!!!!).

Same old story

THIRD, if you compare Plinky's affidavits when she filed her annulment case against her former husband, **Raffy Dominguez** ... she is saying the exact same things—she was beaten up, she was not given money, etc. What about the sides of the men?

Dolly, I am a woman, too. I will not tolerate any form of violence to be committed on my person or family. But I am also broad-minded enough to realize that we women can also commit acts of violence that are no less inexcusable.

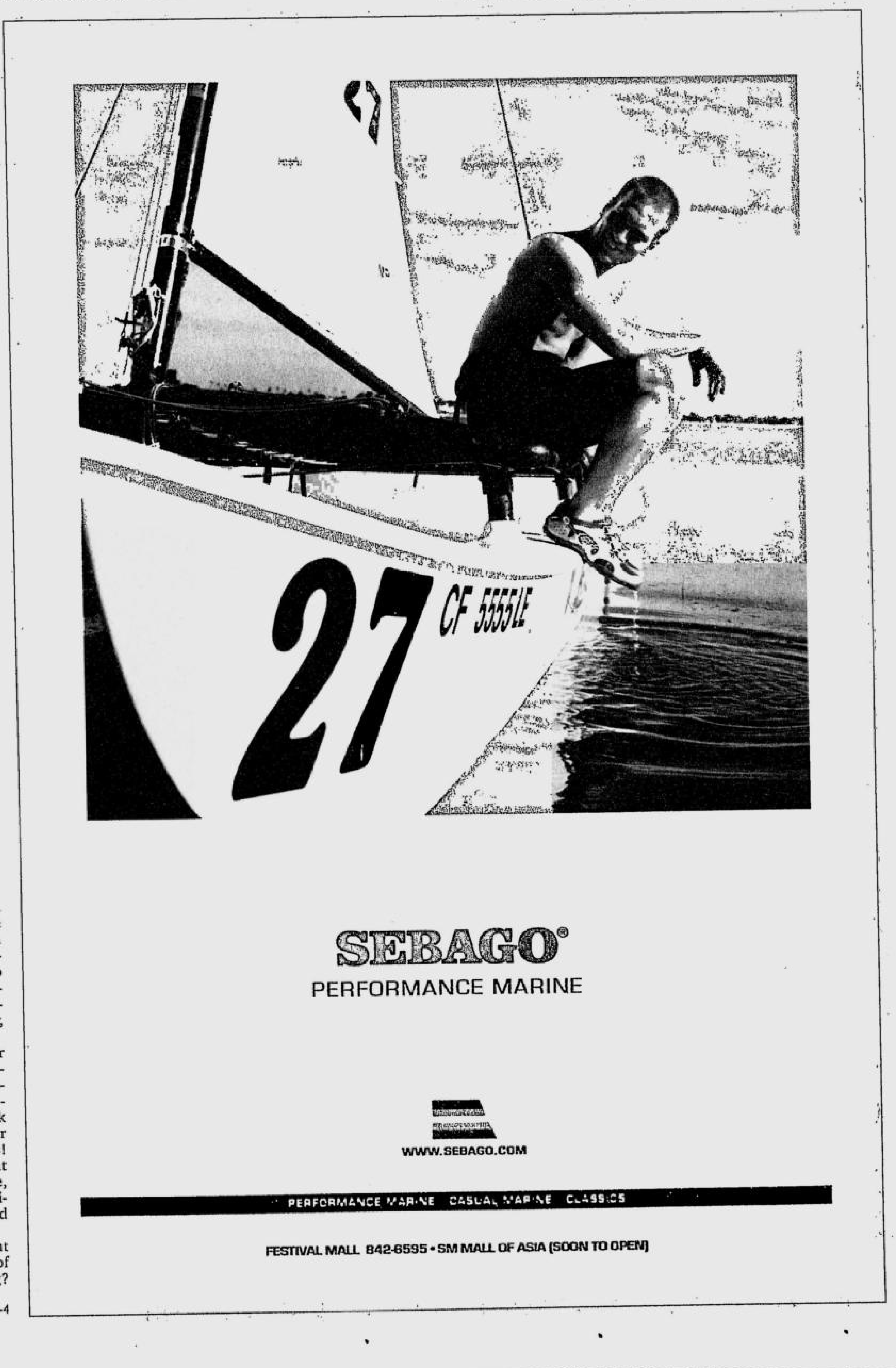
Pls ask Ms. Recto how many times she throw the TV remote control, etc. at her ex? How many times did she attack him, wailing like a fishwife? Again, ask the maids, the helpers, the midwives!

She has claimed more than once that her maids could have been bribed. But you and I both know that a lie can be easily detected. These people are not so cunning as to withstand the pressure of a cross-examination without breaking. Ask them, Dolly, and judge for yourself.

Fourth, Plinky claims that her chronic neck injury started in July and was diagnosed only in August—ergo, it was medically labeled as chronic. Please check her Makati Medical Center records. She's had it for years! The funny thing is, she even went to court sporting a neck brace, for effect. That didn't work, either, because she was discredited by her own doctor!

Why did she bravely come out (even seeking the help of Gabriela) if she was only lying?

READER/ A2-4



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Top female moneymakers in US and RP movies

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

JULIA ROBERTS MAY BE ON A LONG HIATUS from acting to care for her new twin babies, but she's still on top of the movie heap, holding on to her $20M talent fee per film, according to a Hollywood Reporter industry survey.

Nicole Kidman hasn't had a hit in quite a while, but she's still in the No. 2 slot with $17M.

Don't look now, but **Reese Whitherspoon** has surged ahead of the competition, tying with **Drew Barrymore** at $15M.

Renee Zellweger, Cameron Diaz and **Angelina Jolie** are in a three-way tie for the next three places, with talent fees fluctuating, depending on the nature of the film project, from $15 M to $10 M per movie.

Jodie Foster didn't figure in the 2003 and 2004 lists, but "Flight Plan" has put her back in the money circle, with $17 M to $10 M.

And **Charlize Theron** makes $10M per movie, while **Jennifer Aniston** rates $9M. Aniston's feat is exemplary, because she's just shifted from TV to film acting, but she's already among the top female moneymakers in the US film industry.

(Wonder what happened to **Sandra Bullock** and **Jennifer Lopez?**)

RP list

ON THE local movie scene, producers inform us that the top money goes to **Sharon Cuneta** and **Vilma Santos.** No younger actresses? Well, we're told that many young talents are under studio contracts, which are generally less generous than freelancers' fees.

In any case, most local stars have lowered their talent fees, in recognition of the hard times that the Filipino movie industry is currently experiencing.

In fact, actors make such more money these days on television, especially in the topbill long-running *tele-novelas*, which assure them of regular income for months on end.

Happily for US stars, the American film scene is doing quite well, thank you, so their talent fees remain high.

Of all female stars, however, only Roberts has joined the exclusive "$20 M club" with male superstars like **Tom Cruise, Mel Gibson** and **Tom Hanks.**

Why has she been so singularly blessed? Well, she's been around a long time, but her popularity hasn't waned. In fact, her most current starrers have either scored big at the box office ("Erin Brockovich" and "Ocean's Eleven") or won her critical praise ("Frozen").

But, if Roberts has put her career temporarily on hold, isn't her talent fee moot and academic? Not really. Movie projects often take years to get off the ground, so even now, she's already being sounded out to do projects right after her long "family vacation" ends—*if* the price is right.

To put the subject in perspective, however, those top stellar talent fees aren't carved in stone. For "Frozen," for instance, Roberts lowered her fee drastically. And other top stars have brought down their asking price, in favor of "points" on film grosses enable them to earn even more after a movie is shown—if it turns out to be a hit.

The best example of this is **Tom Cruise**, who opted for production points in "Mission Impossible," and ended up making much more than $20M for starring in that blockbuster. How much more?—Would you believe $50M? Other top stars can take their cue from that!

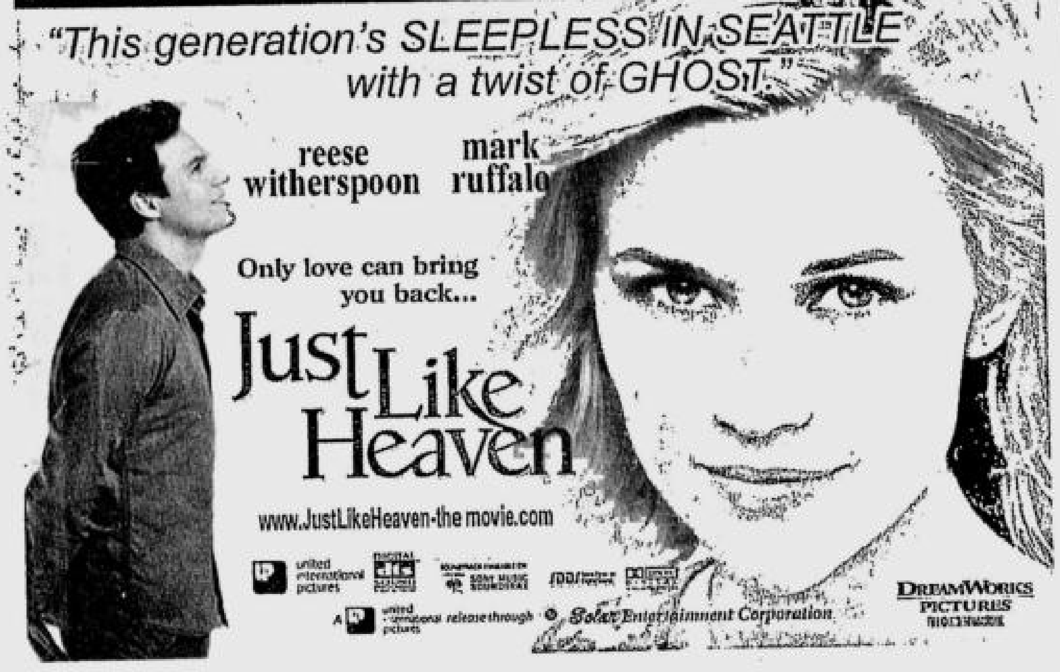
'The Chronicles of Narnia'

THE STAGE has been set for the world premiere of "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," one of the most anticipated movies of the year. Tomorrow, in the presence of the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, the extraordinary film event will transform the Royal Albert Hall and Kensington Garden into wintry Narnia. The premiere is a fundraising event in aid of the Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund.

The movie follows the exploits of four siblings who discover an amazing new world that has been cursed to eternal winter by the evil White Witch. The children fight to overcome her powerful hold over Narnia in a spectacular battle that is the climax of the film. "Narnia" starts its Philippine run next month.

Garage sale

THE SOUTHEAST Asian Foundation for Children and Television will hold a unique garage sale and bazzar at 8 a.m. on Dec. 10 to benefit the Anak TV Seal. The venue is the Consuelo Building parking area on Tomas Morato Ave., QC. The garage sale features stars, broadcasters, writers and directors who will part with their old but still usable items. Do go out of your way to patronize the sale—it's for a very good cause! Call 374-3739.



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6 GOLD (SDDS) CHICKEN LITTLE
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5 MAHAROT

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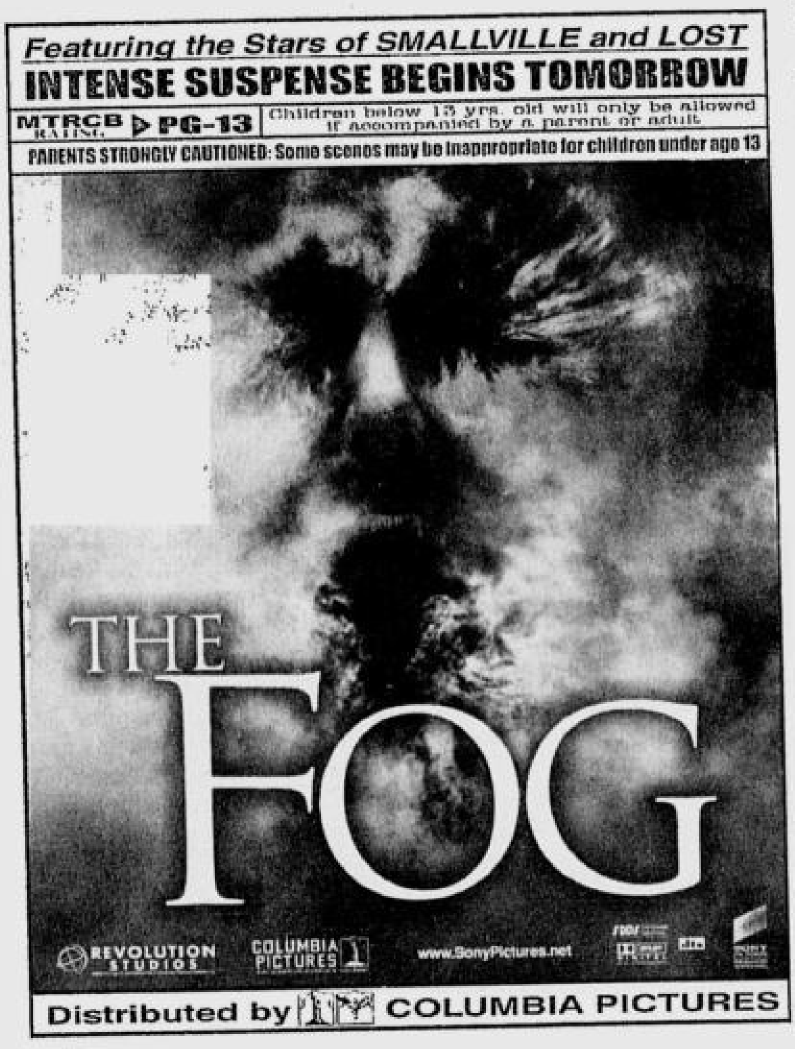

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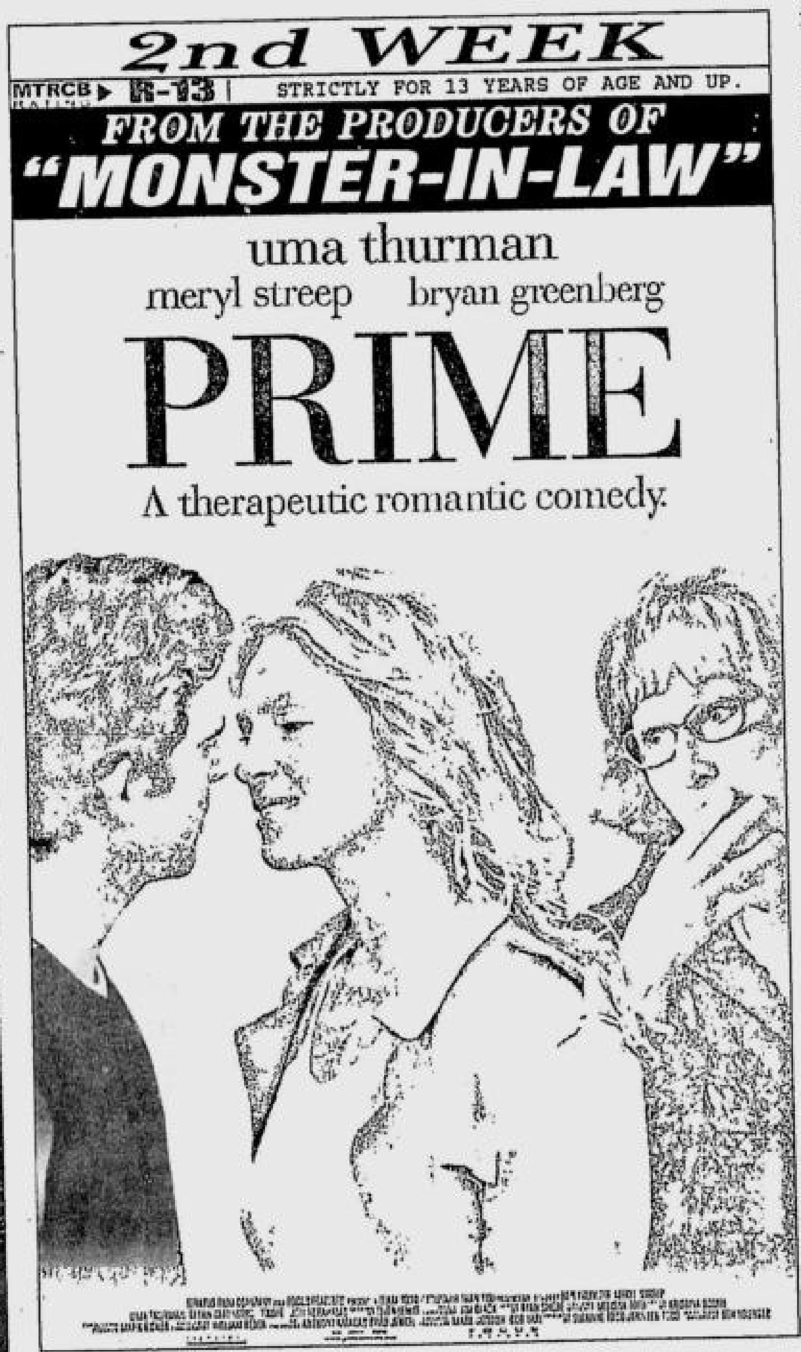

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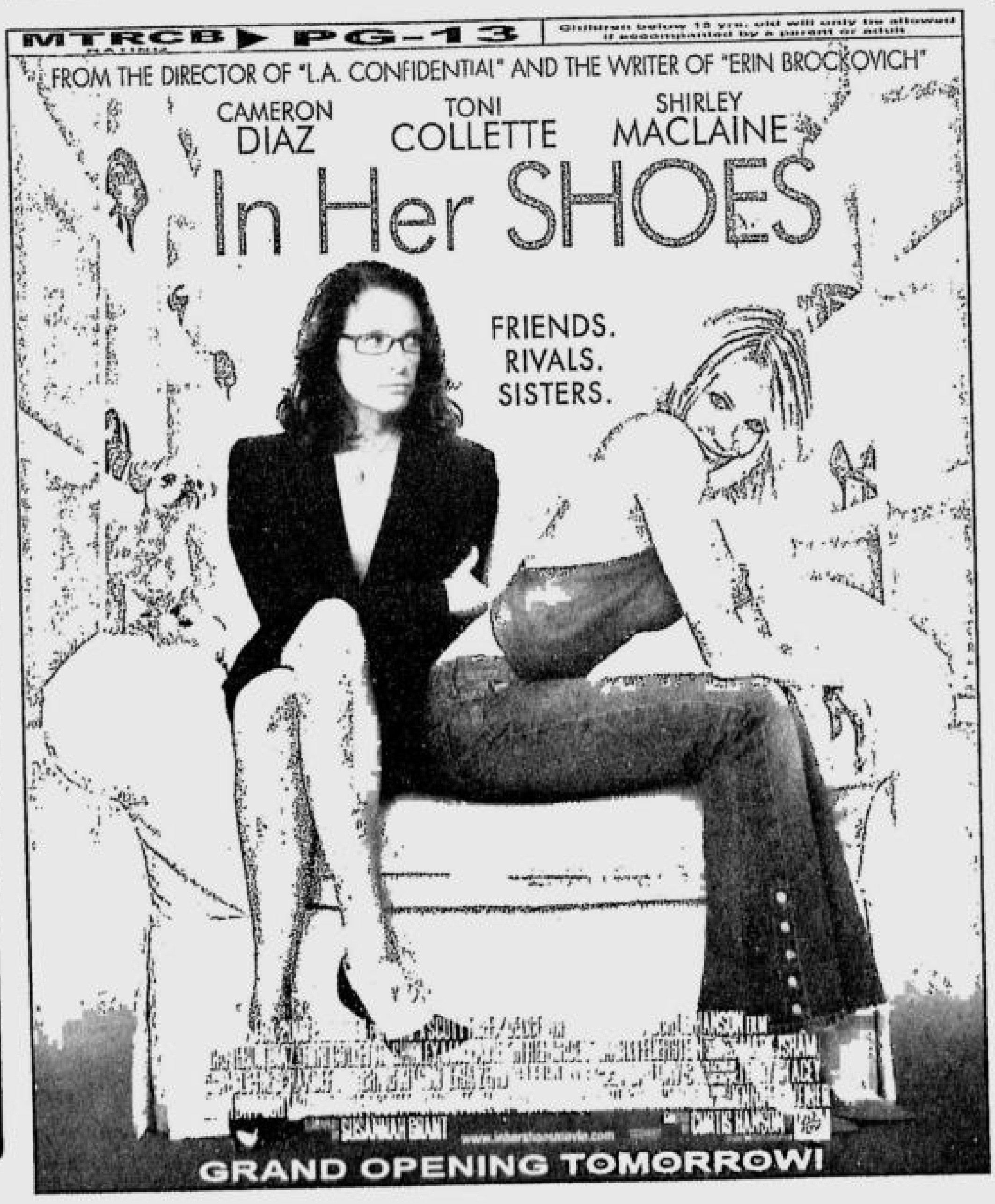

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12:00 3:10 6:20 9:30

2 CHICKEN LITTLE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 PRIME
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

5 HARI NG SABLAY
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

7 FLIGHTPLAN
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 THE EXORCISM of EMILY ROSE
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

9 THE MYTH
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

10 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
1:25 4:10 6:55 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE 12:00 3:20 6:40 10:00

2 PRIME
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 HARI NG SABLAY
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 THE MYTH
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 CHICKEN LITTLE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50

6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 THE EXORCISM of EMILY ROSE
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 PRIME
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
12:10 3:20 6:30 9:40

3 CHICKEN LITTLE
12:15 2:00 3:45 5:30 7:15 9:00

4 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
11:50 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00

5 THE MYTH
1:10 3:50 6:30 9:10

6 APRIL SNOW
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

8 HARI NG SABLAY
1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
2 THE MYTH
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 HARI NG SABLAY
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

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2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 RESERVE
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PIONEER 687-5378

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2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 THE EXORCISM of EMILY ROSE

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3 THE EXORCISM of EMILY ROSE
4 THE MYTH
5 HARI NG SABLAY

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2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE

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2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 THE EXORCISM of EMILY ROSE
4 THE MYTH
5 HARI NG SABLAY

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5 CRY_WOLF
6 THE MYTH

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2 CRY_WOLF
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
4 THE MYTH
5 FOUR BROTHERS
6 DOMINO

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2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
4 MY SASSY GIRL
5 FOUR BROTHERS

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN	2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN	3 THX JUST LIKE HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	4 PRIME	5 THE MYTH	6 CHICKEN LITTLE	7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 11:30, 2:40, 5:50, 9:00	2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN 12:10, 2:15, 4:20, 6:25, 8:30					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX JUST LIKE HEAVEN 2:50, 4:55, 7:00, 9:05, 11:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 1:30, 4:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	3 DEEP BLUE 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HARRY POTTER 4 1:30, 4:40, 7:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CHICKEN LITTLE 1:20, 3:10, 5:00, 6:50, 8:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX JUST LIKE HEAVEN	2 CHICKEN LITTLE	3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	4 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	5 CHICKEN LITTLE		
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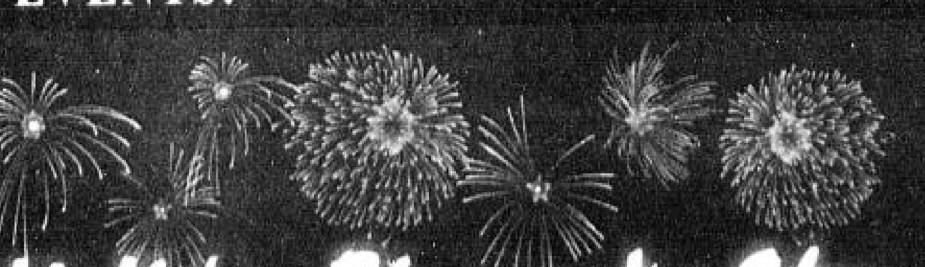

Holiday Fireworks Show

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December 4, 11, 18 and 25,
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Market! Market! Simbang Gabi
at the 5th level lobby
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Reader defends Plinky's ex-BF

From page A2-1

Simple. Because she was about to lose in the case. Isn't it ironic that she likes labelling the ex as the powerful one when it was she who asked the powers that be to influence the judge? at least two powerful people tried ... and failed. Now ... she is crying "injustice."

I suggest you talk to lawyer **Katrina Legarda** and ask why she turned down Plinky's case. [Also] why was Plinky turned down by the Fortun brothers? Again, simple. Because Plinky fabricates tales that will eventually catch up with her.

Sadly, the issue here is not violence ... but money. The guy is not as powerful as Plinky says, but he is certainly well off.

Plinky seems to misread the cards. In the past, every time she threw a big, violent and histrionic tantrum, he would walk out but later on cajole her with expensive gifts. This time, he just walked out of her life.

Then, she filed the suit, asking for money. Now she is using the violence issue to get sympathy, and yes, to get more money.

She has managed to circumvent the gag order by talking about the case and by giving hints as to his identity.

You are a woman, too, but a discerning one. You will know the truth when you hear both sides.

Thanks and more power to you.

Faith Martinez (fmar168@yahoo.com)

New hang-out

I HAD a blast at the opening of the coolest hangout in San Juan Ankies Bar Resto and Grill (713 J. Abad Santos St. Greenhils) I did the ribbon cutting along with **Cristina Gonzales, Maria Isabel Lopez, Azenith Briones** and model **Marlan Manguba.** Thanks to the gracious owners **Cecille Mirasol, Fatima** and **Ronald Bertol** and my fave designer of all time, **Goulee Gorospe,** for making me feel instantly at home. I couldn't have enough of their T-bone steak, crispy pata, fettucini al Diablo to name a few of their mouth-watering specialties. I also enjoyed chilling out at their I-pod listening station. Check out Ankies. It's truly a nightowl's oasis!

Just asking

EVERYBODY is humming the theme of "Pinoy Big Brother" by Orange and Lemons. It has become like a national anthem already. But did you know that it sounds exactly like "Chandeliers" by Care? Is this just coincidence, or did Orange and Lemons rip off the song and just wrote in Tagalog lyrics? Does that make the band Pinoy Big Imitators?

Announcements

FROM my coolest Kumpare **Francis M**—I'm having a music fest "Kapayapaan" on Dec. 11 at Marikina Riverbanks Amphitheatre. I'll be performing with The Dawn, **Andrew E.,** Sandwich, Kjwan, The Youth, Ely Buendia, Pupil, Imago, Greyhoundz, Gloc 9, Pikaso 6, Cycle Mind, Spongecola, Dicta Licence and many more. Tickets are P100 only.

From **Sunshine Cruz**—I gave birth last night (Dec. 1) to a healthy baby girl weighing 3066 grams with a length of 48 cm. Thanks for your prayers. Too bad *di nakaabot si* Buboy (Cesar Montano)

From Anthony Pangilinan:

Hi, Dolly,

I just wanted to let you know that I'm here in the US for my 4-year-old son Benjamin's open heart surgery to corrent a significant narrowing of the main vessel leading to the heart.

May I thank some people through you?

Last Saturday before we left, my batch mates in La Salle ('82), through **Ton Francisco** and **Reggie Asuncion**) with Genesis Productions and Merk's Bar, put together a benefit show for Benjamin. Thanks to them—those who came and those who performed. We were able to raise some funds to help ease the burden of the cost of this procedure. Thanks to **Gary V, Sharon C, Richard Merk, Ray Ann Fuentes, Annie Brazil, Candy Pangilinan, Pam G, Paolo V** and his band **Salamin, Jaime Rivera, Gabriel V,** and yes, even the **Pangilinan Harana Boys.** The show was a knockout!

Am requesting for prayers for the successful surgery and quick healing of my son.

(E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com)

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:45, 4:10, 7:35, 11:00 GP
2 CHICKEN LITTLE 12:10, 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GP
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20 8:40, 11:00 GP
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00 PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
THE MYTH PG13 - 1:45,4:15 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE PG13 6:45,9:20
CHICKEN LITTLE GP 11:00,1:00,3:00, 5:00,7:00,9:00
HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE GP 12:30,3:40,6:50,10:00
CHICKEN LITTLE GP 11:50,1:50,3:50 PRIME R13 5:30,7:45,10:00
PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS PG13 12:50,3:00,5:10,7:20,9:30
JUST LIKE HEAVEN GP 1:35,3:45,5:55,8:05,10:15
SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL: 898 1440-41.

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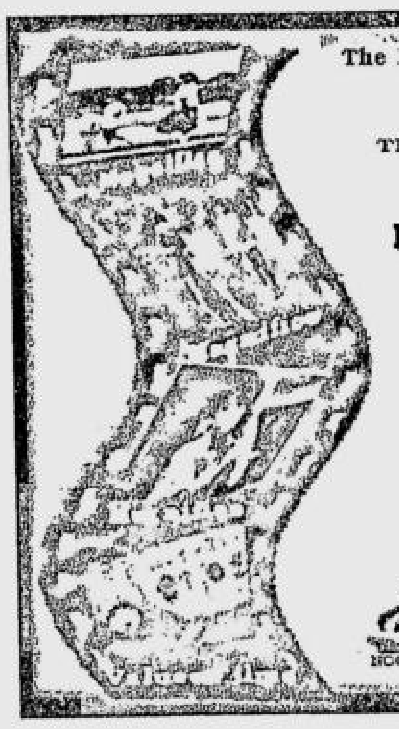
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 PRIME (R13) 11:20, 2:05 EXORCISM (PG13) 5:00, 7:40, 10:20
CINEMA 2 HARRY POTTER & The GOBLET OF FIRE GP - 11:00, 2:20, 5:40, 9:00
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 CHICKEN LITTLE GP 11:45, 1:40, 3:35, 5:30, 7:25, 9:20
CINEMA 4 CHICKEN LITTLE GP - 10:45, 12:40, 2:35, 4:30, 6:25, 8:20, 10:15
CINEMA 5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN - PG13 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM December 10, 2005 CUESHE 8PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635



The National Commission for Culture and the Arts
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RODELSA HALL,
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NCCA

Araneta Center Leisure Guide
CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CinePlex*10 LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 HARRY POTTER
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555
HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40
JUST LIKE HEAVEN 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20
MERRY CHRISTMAS 1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
...MAXIMO OLIVEROS 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20
HARI NG SABLAY 12:35 / 3:45 / 4:55 / 7:05 / 9:15
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA CHICKEN LITTLE 1:10 / 6:10 HARRY POTTER 3.00 / 9:00
CHICKEN LITTLE 11:30 / 1:45 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 8:55
THE MYTH 1:15 / 4:00 / 6:45 / 9:30
EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 1:10 / 3:50 / 6:30 / 9:20
PRIME 1:05 / 3:50 / 6:35 / 9:20
ALI MALL CINEMAS
① HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET 12:00 R4 / 2:00 / 5:00 / 8:00
② HARI NG SABLAY 12:10 R3 / 1:40 / 3:50 / 6:00 / 8:10
③ CHICKEN LITTLE 12:20 / 2:35 / 4:50 / 7:30
④ ...MAXIMO OLIVEROS 12:05 R3/ 1:45 / 3:55 / 6:05 / 8:15
⑤ THE MYTH 12:20 / 3:05 / 5:50 / 8:35
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS
ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
ATENEO - LA SALLE DREAM GAMES '05 Dec 8 Thu LEGENDS GAME 4:30 pm DREAM GAME 7pm
URCC - THE ART OF WAR December 10 Saturday 8:00 pm
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SM Cinema CENTER Stage FOR INQUIRIES 8311000 loc. 2871,2873,2882,2891

SM movietime EXCLUSIVE
Samuel Jackson Eugene Levy
The MAN
Directed by Les Mayfield
From the creators of "Rush Hour" comes another explosive action comedy film! Tough Federal agent Derrick Vann (Samuel Jackson) is forced to team up with dental supply salesman Andy Fiddler (Eugene Levy) to recover a pile of stolen weapons Van is suspected of stealing. Will this unlikely duo solve the crime in time or will Vann go down for the crime?
NOW SHOWING
Bacoor, Bicutan, Fairview, Las Piñas, Manila, Megamall, North EDSA, San Lazaro, Sta. Mesa, Sucat, and Valenzuela

movietime SCHEDULE AND EVENTS
an unfinished life
RED CARPET PREMIERE TONIGHT! Megamall AN UNFINISHED LIFE Dec. 6 • Cinema 2
movietime EXCLUSIVE BLOODFIST 2050: THE LEGENDCONTINUES Now Showing THE MAN Now Showing
LOOK WHO'S WATCHING AT THE PODIUM! CHICKEN LITTLE NOW SHOWING
GUARANTEED SEATS
THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 CHICKEN LITTLE 12:30FS/01:00MF/03:00/05:00/7:00 08:30LFS/09:00LMF/10:30END
2 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 11:00FS/11:30MF/02:40/05:50 08:30LFS/09:00LMF/11:40END
MEGAMALL
1 THE MYTH 11:15FS/11:40FS/02:10/04:40 07:10/09:10LFS/09:40LMF/11:40END
CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 RESERVED
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN 11:50FS/12:00MF/01:54/03:48/05:42 07:36/09:10LFS/09:30LMF/11:05END
3 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 11:15FS/12:00MF/01:54/03:48/05:42 07:36/09:21LFS/09:30LMF/11:15END

MATTHEW MULLINS VS. MONSOUR DEL ROSARIO
Bloodfist 2050

Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros
WORLD-CLASS, PROUDLY PINOY!
BEST PICTURE BEST DIRECTOR and BEST ACTOR
BEST PICTURE BEST ACTOR BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN
BEST PICTURE

METRO MANILA
SM MEGAMALL
1 THE MYTH
2 FLIGHTPLAN
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 PAPARAZZI
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 MERRY CHRISTMAS
8 HARI NG SABLAY
9 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
10 PRIME
11 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12 THE MAN
SM CITY STA. MESA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
5 HARI NG SABLAY
6 PRIME
7 THE MYTH
8 THE MAN
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 LEGEND OF ZORRO
SM CITY BICUTAN
1 THE MAN
2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
SM VALENZUELA NOW OPEN
1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 THE MAN
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 BLOODFIST 2050: THE LEGEND CONTINUES
2 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
3 FLIGHTPLAN
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
5 THE MYTH
6 HARI NG SABLAY
7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
8 CHICKEN LITTLE
9 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
10 THE MAN
11 PRIME
12 APRIL SNOW
SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
5 THE MYTH
6 HARI NG SABLAY
7 FLIGHTPLAN
8 THE MAN
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 PRIME
SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 THE MAN
2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 CHICKEN LITTLE
SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 THE MYTH
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 HARI NG SABLAY
6 CHICKEN LITTLE
7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
8 THE MAN
SM CITY MANILA
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 THE MAN
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 THE MYTH
7 BLOODFIST 2050: THE LEGEND CONTINUES
8 PRIME
9 HARI NG SABLAY
10 MERRY CHRISTMAS
11 FLIGHTPLAN
12 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
SM CINEMA CAINTA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 THE MAN
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
5 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 HARI NG SABLAY

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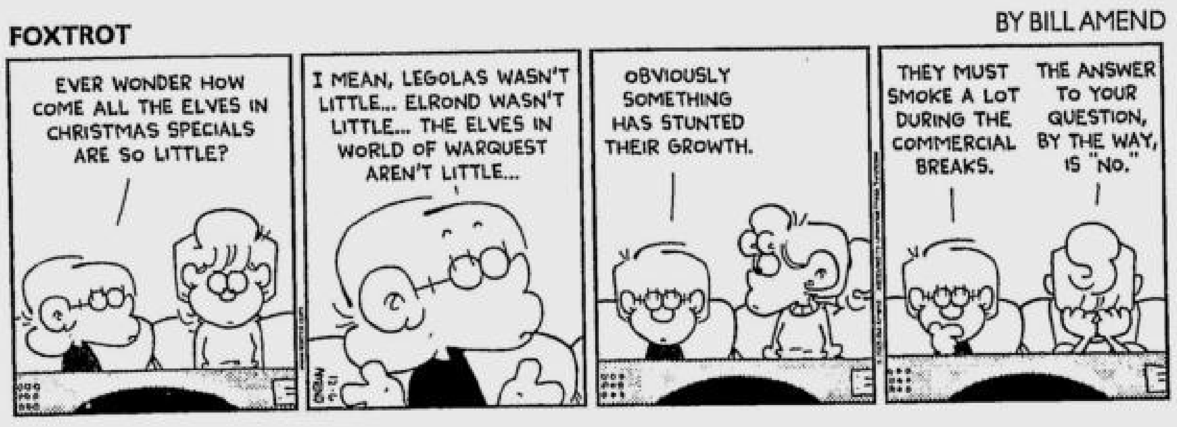
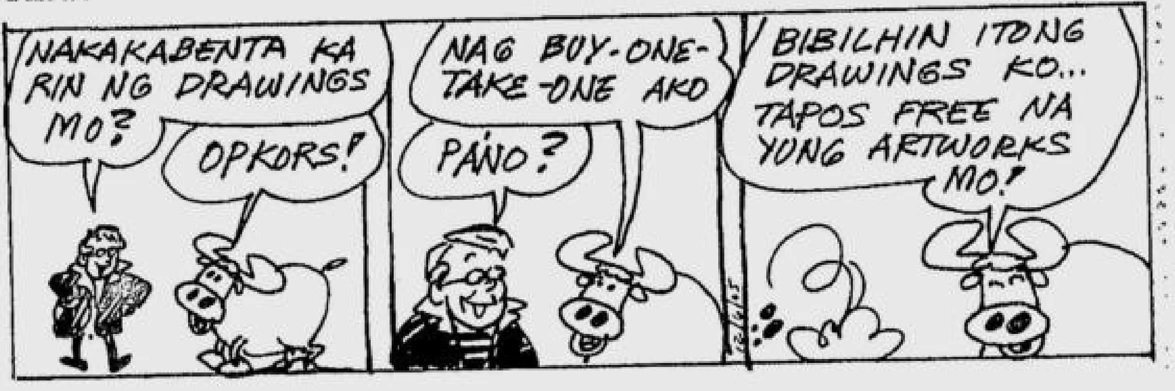
LUZON
SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 CRY WOLF
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 THE MYTH
5 HARI NG SABLAY
SM CITY BAGUIO
1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 THE MYTH
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
SM MOLINO NOW OPEN
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 CHICKEN LITTLE
3 THE MYTH
4 HARI NG SABLAY
SM CITY BACOOR
1 THE MAN
2 THE MYTH
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 HARI NG SABLAY
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 BLOODFIST 2050: THE LEGEND CONTINUES
SM CITY MARILAO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 THE MYTH
SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 THE MYTH
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 CHICKEN LITTLE
SM CITY LUCENA
1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 MY SASSY GIRL
4 HARI NG SABLAY
SM CITY BATANGAS
1 CHICKEN LITTLE
2 HARI NG SABLAY
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 FOUR BROTHERS
VISAYAS AND MINDANAO
SM CITY CEBU
1 RESERVED
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
4 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
7 HARI NG SABLAY
8 THE MYTH
SM CITY ILOILO
1 HARI NG SABLAY
2 RESERVED
3 THE MYTH
4 FOUR BROTHERS
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
7 RESERVED
8 MY SASSY GIRL
SM CITY DAVAO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 MY SASSY GIRL
3 HARI NG SABLAY
4 APRIL SNOW
5 THE MYTH
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
2 APRIL SNOW
3 CHICKEN LITTLE
4 WAITING
SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

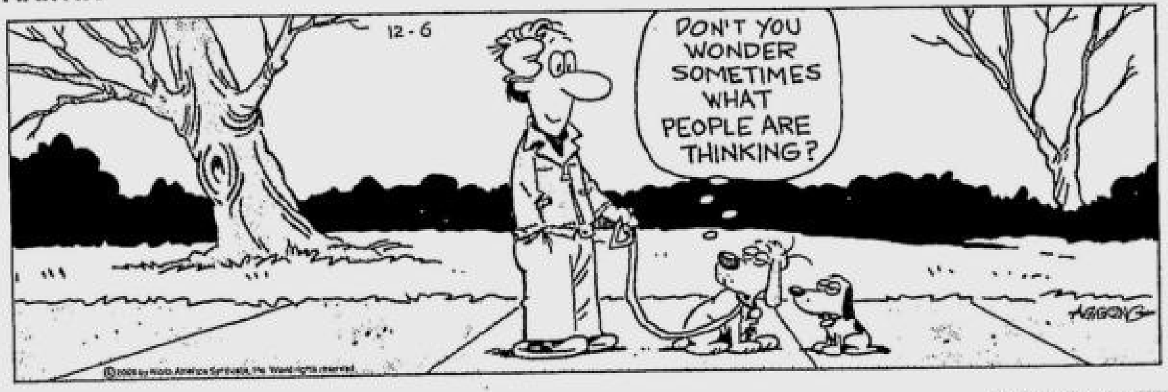
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


EVER WONDER HOW COME ALL THE ELVES IN CHRISTMAS SPECIALS ARE SO LITTLE?
I MEAN, LEGOLAS WASN'T LITTLE... ELROND WASN'T LITTLE... THE ELVES IN WORLD OF WARQUEST AREN'T LITTLE...
OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING HAS STUNTED THEIR GROWTH.
THEY MUST SMOKE A LOT DURING THE COMMERCIAL BREAKS.
THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION, BY THE WAY, IS "NO."

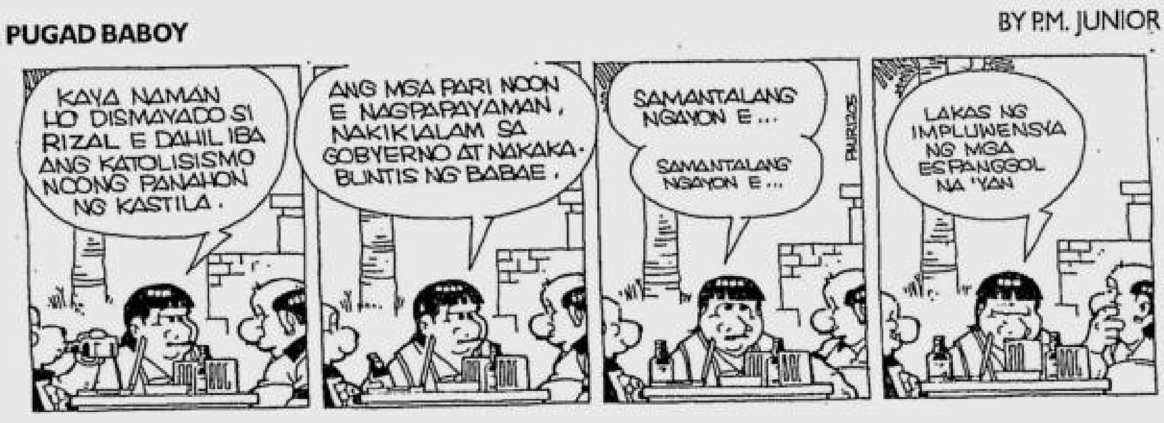
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


NAKAKABENTA KA RIN NG DRAWINGS MO?
OPKORS!
NAG BUY-ONE-TAKE-ONE AKO
PANO?
BIBILHIN ITONG DRAWINGS KO... TAPOS FREE NA YUNG ARTWORKS MO!

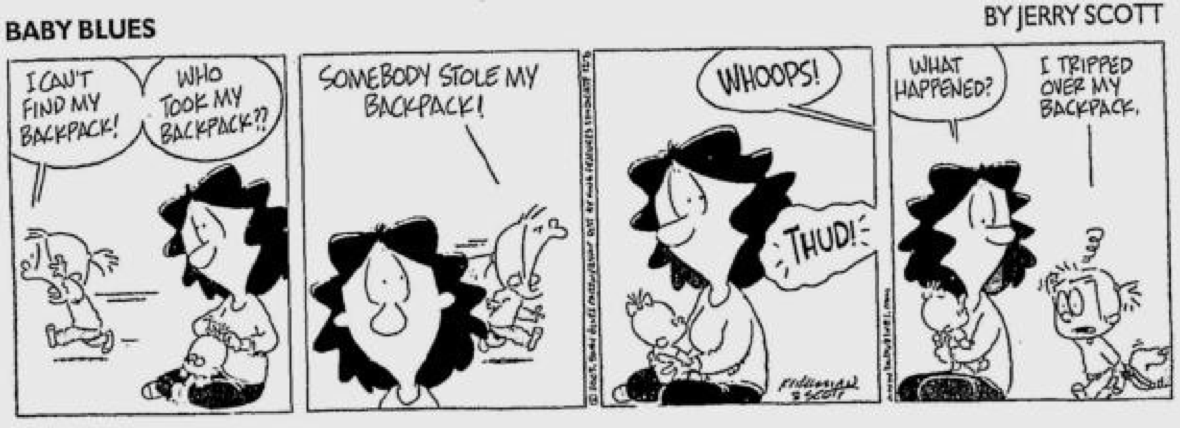
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


12-6
DON'T YOU WONDER SOMETIMES WHAT PEOPLE ARE THINKING?

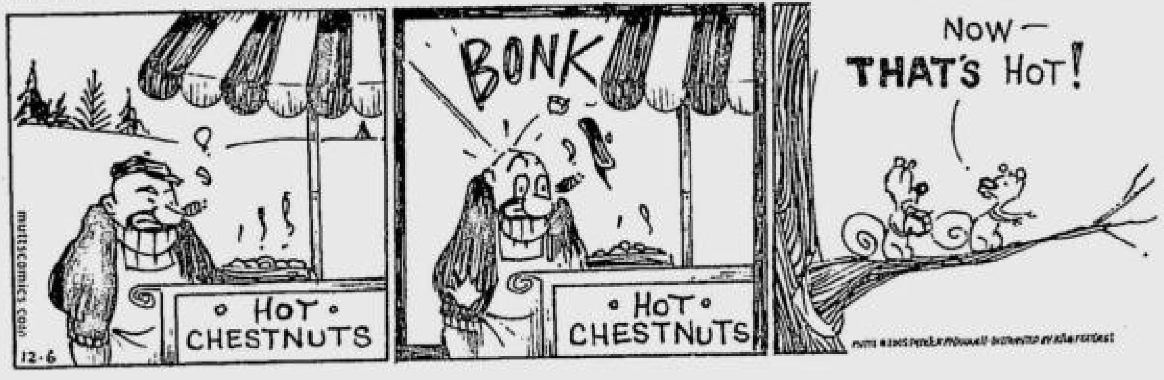
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


KAYA NAMAN HO DISMAYADO SI RIZAL E DAHIL IBA ANG KATOLISISMO NOONG PANAHON NG KASTILA.
ANG MGA PARI NOON E NAGPAPAYAMAN, NAKIKIALAM SA GOBYERNO AT NAKAKABUNTIS NG BABAE.
SAMANTALANG NGAYON E...
SAMANTALANG NGAYON E...
LAKAS NG IMPLUWENSYA NG MGA ESPANGGOL NA 'YAN

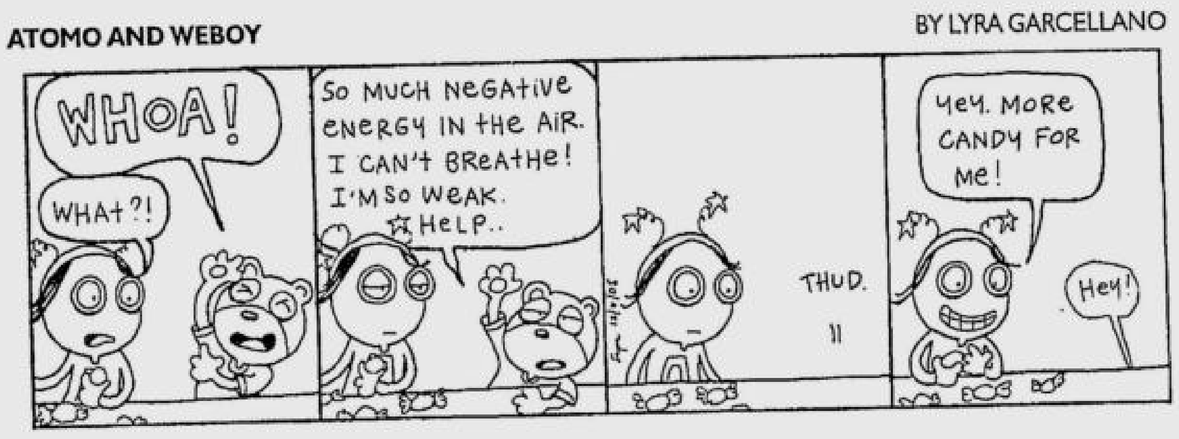
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


I CAN'T FIND MY BACKPACK!
WHO TOOK MY BACKPACK??
SOMEBODY STOLE MY BACKPACK!
WHOOPS!
THUD!
WHAT HAPPENED?
I TRIPPED OVER MY BACKPACK.

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

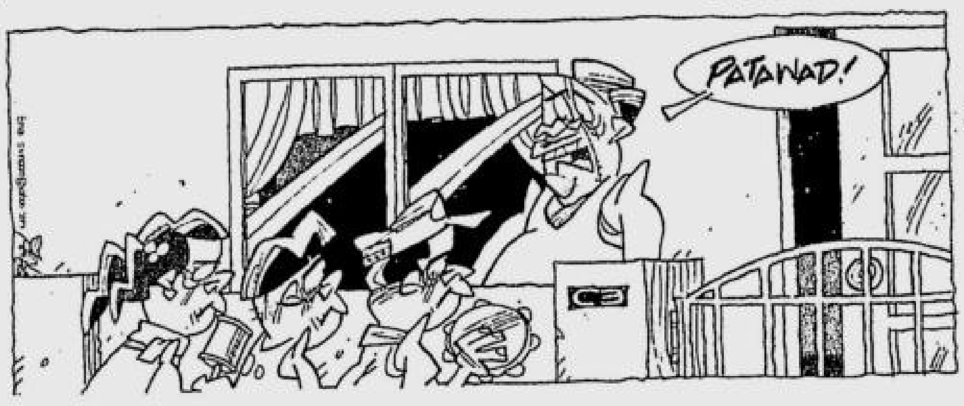

HOT CHESTNUTS
BONK
HOT CHESTNUTS
NOW — THAT'S HOT!
12-6

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHOA!
WHAT?!
SO MUCH NEGATIVE ENERGY IN THE AIR. I CAN'T BREATHE! I'M SO WEAK. HELP..
THUD.
YEY. MORE CANDY FOR ME!
HEY!

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

ANG PASKO AY TALAGANG PANAHON NG PAGPAPATAWAD



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're extremely capable. You work hard at whatever you choose to pursue. You're well-organized, realistic and resourceful. You seek out practical solutions. You want things to go the way you plan them. (They often do.) The year ahead can be one of the most fortunate years of your life. Go forward and open any door! **Birthdate of:** Ira Gershwin, lyricist; Steven Wright, comic/actor; Agnes Moorehead, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Time spent with friends, groups and organizations will please you in the next six weeks. You feel extra-friendly toward others now. This feeling will last for a while.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Bosses, VIPs, parents and teachers start to see you in a positive light. They think you're the cat's meow! The next few weeks are a good time to push your agenda forward.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): If you have an opportunity to register for a course or take classes in something during the next six to eight weeks, by all means, do it! You're hungry to learn, travel and expand your mind.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): In the next month or so, people will become quite generous toward you. Don't be afraid to accept this generosity. There are probably no strings attached.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Close friendships and partnerships certainly mean a lot to you now. It's easy to express your affection to others. Naturally, they will do likewise to you. (We all love to be loved.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Matters related to your job will probably improve in the next six weeks. Similarly, you might also notice an improvement in your health. (Just watch out for sweets.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Romance, love affairs, the arts, vacations, professional sports and playful activities with children can bring you much enjoyment in the next two months. Get ready for fun!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): In the next few weeks, you'll enjoy shopping for family members and for pretty things for where you live. In fact, all family relationships will improve.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Relationships with siblings and neighbors get cozier now. You enjoy the company of others. What you're beginning to discover is just how much love there is in your daily life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be alert for good moneymaking opportunities in the next few weeks. Your cash flow will please you. You might be spending more, but you might be earning more as well.

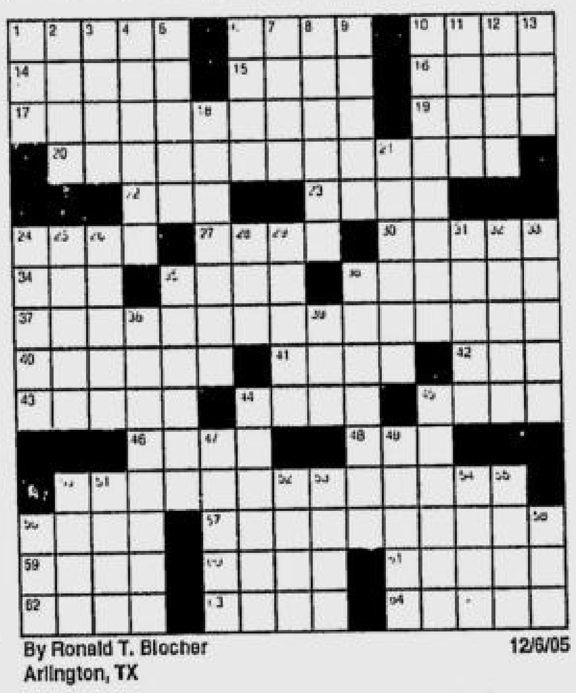
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): The month ahead is an excellent time to buy wardrobe items. You're looking good. Relations with close friends are excellent now.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're starting to feel better about how things are working: less doubt, more confidence. Bosses and VIPs are impressed with you too! Life is good.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Presents
6 Nave's neighbor
10 Flexible type of armor
14 On every side
15 Sledgehammer
16 Florence's river
17 Golden State capital
19 Fellows
20 Calling one's sweetie?
22 Opposite of 'neath
23 Gather in
24 British machine gun
27 Cost per unit
30 Figure of speech
34 Feel ill
35 First-class
36 Routine tasks
37 Final oldie?
40 Entanglements
41 Pod contents
42 Lower digit
43 Perplexed
44 Takes off
45 "I Loves You, Porgy" singer
46 Love god
48 Get the point
50 Altercation at the drive-thru?
56 Ornamental case
57 Puts oil in vinegar
59 Poetic Ireland
60 Ray of "Battle Cry"
61 Veil material
62 "King __"
63 Soaked in anil
64 Hardy wheat

DOWN
1 Argon or neon
2 Structural beam
3 Points of convergence
4 Set in operation
5 Broadway platform
6 Prayer conclusion
7 Sharp spasm
8 Surgical line
9 Run off to marry
10 Ludicrous misuse of a word
11 Saudi man
12 500-mi. event
13 __ Alamos, NM
18 Looking glasses
21 Takes to the tub
24 Model wood
25 Mirthful
26 Maxwell and Schiaparelli
28 Year in Acapulco
29 Pace
31 Speechify
32 Sonora simoleons
33 Senator Kefauver
35 Fired up
36 Car frame
38 Walking
39 Tiger's peg
44 In a gruesome manner
45 Add muscle
47 Mountain nymph
49 Film cuts
50 Another in Spanish
51 Lay waste to
52 Stocking shade
53 Lump of dirt
54 World's longest river
55 Relate
56 Spider-spotter's cry
58 Tennis grouping



By Ronald T. Blocher
Arlington, TX

12/6/05

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	U	R	E	■	A	W	F	U	L	■	A	T	T	S
P	L	U	M	■	P	A	O	L	I	■	C	A	U	L
E	N	D	P	R	O	D	U	C	T	■	C	C	L	I
C	A	D	R	E	■	■	R	E	M	A	R	K	E	D
K	E	Y	E	D	U	P	■	R	U	R	A	L	■	■
■	■	■	S	O	R	E	■	S	S	E	■	E	W	E
T	O	G	S	■	G	E	T	■	■	A	T	B	A	Y
A	G	U	E	■	E	N	V	O	I	■	R	O	D	E
C	L	A	S	P	■	■	S	I	R	■	A	X	I	S
H	E	R	■	E	A	R	■	L	A	P	D	■	■	■
■	■	D	R	A	P	E	■	S	Q	U	E	A	L	S
D	E	R	I	S	I	V	E	■	■	R	O	G	U	E
I	R	A	N	■	C	E	N	T	E	R	F	O	L	D
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T	O	L	E	■	S	T	Y	E	S	■	S	A	S	E

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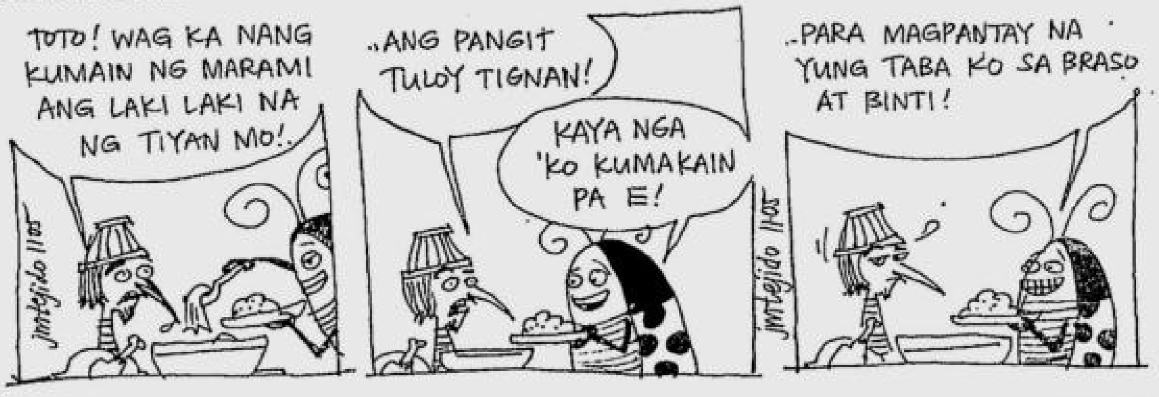
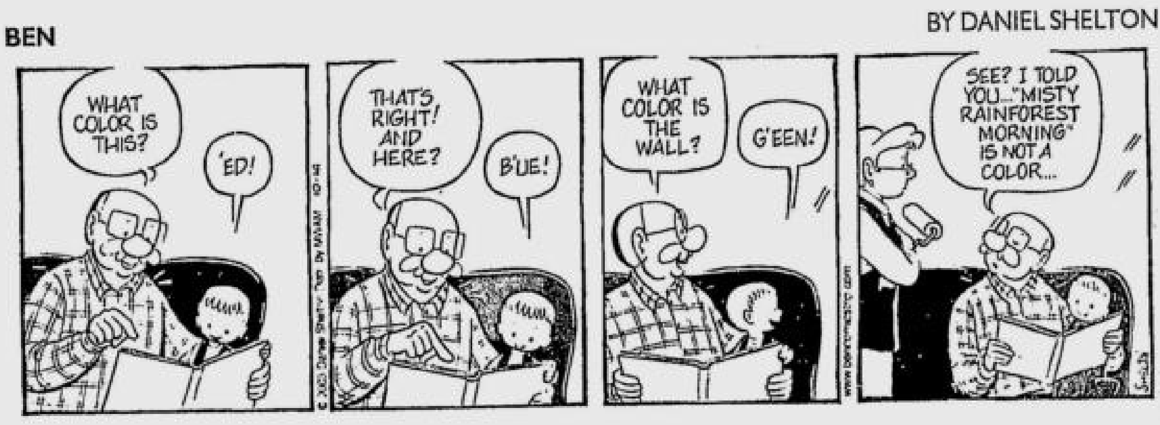
12/6/05

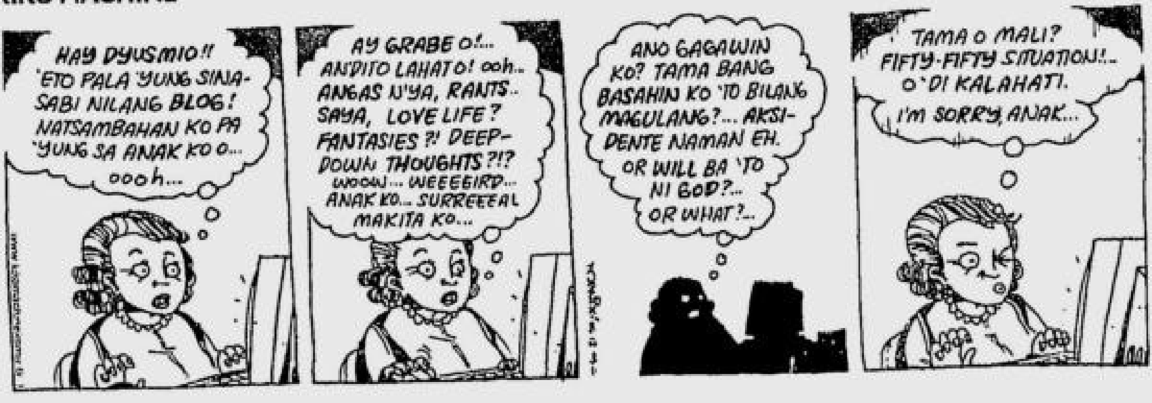
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


TOTO! WAG KA NANG KUMAIN NG MARAMI ANG LAKI LAKI NA NG TIYAN MO!..
..ANG PANGIT TULOY TIGNAN!
KAYA NGA 'KO KUMAKAIN PA E!
..PARA MAGPANTAY NA YUNG TABA KO SA BRASO AT BINTI!

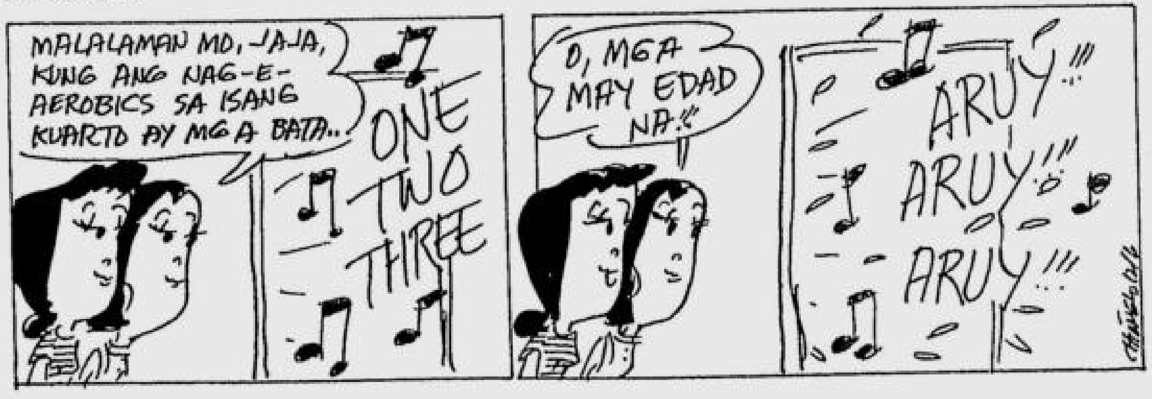
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT COLOR IS THIS?
'ED!
THAT'S RIGHT! AND HERE?
B'UE!
WHAT COLOR IS THE WALL?
G'EEN!
SEE? I TOLD YOU..."MISTY RAINFOREST MORNING" IS NOT A COLOR...

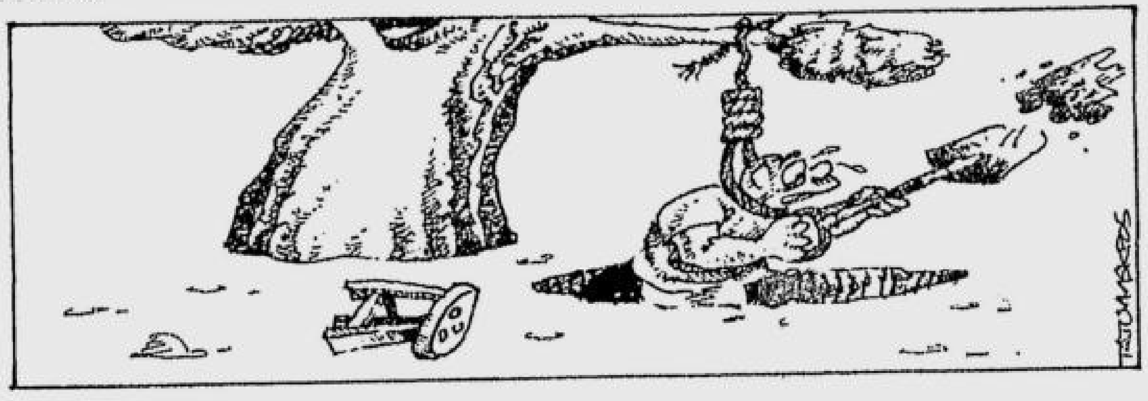
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


HAY DYUSMIO!! 'ETO PALA 'YUNG SINASABI NILANG BLOG! NATSAMBAHAN KO PA 'YUNG SA ANAK KO O... oooh...
AY GRABE O!... ANDITO LAHAT O! ooh.. ANGAS N'YA, RANTS.. SAYA, LOVE LIFE? FANTASIES?! DEEP-DOWN THOUGHTS?!? WOOW... WEEEEIRD... ANAK KO... SURREEEAL MAKITA KO...
ANO GAGAWIN KO? TAMA BANG BASAHIN KO 'TO BILANG MAGULANG?... AKSIDENTE NAMAN EH. OR WILL BA 'TO NI GOD?... OR WHAT?...
TAMA O MALI? FIFTY-FIFTY SITUATION!.. O' DI KALAHATI. I'M SORRY, ANAK...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

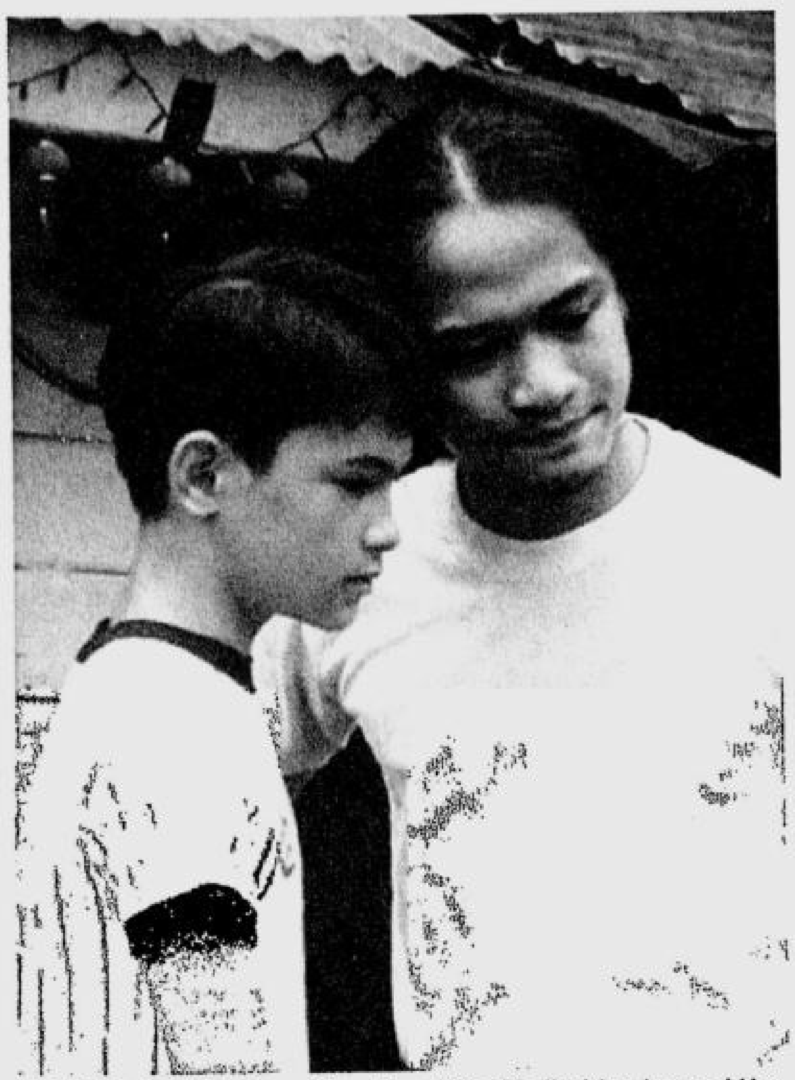

MALALAMAN MO, JAJA, KUNG ANG NAG-E-AEROBICS SA ISANG KUARTO AY MGA BATA..
ONE TWO THREE
O, MGA MAY EDAD NA..!
ARUY!!! ARUY!!! ARUY!!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Maximum heartache

The poignant 'Maximo Oliveros' illustrates that innocence is no insurance against violence



MAXI (Nathan Lopez) and Kuya Bogs (Ping Medina) in what could be the film's the most moving scene.

By Lito B. Zulueta

REVIEW

IT'S NOT EASY TO MISS THE conceit in "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros." Because of the penchant of Filipino cinema for tearjerkers and comedies tackling the travails, joys and puppy loves of adolescents and teenagers, it seems only a matter of time for our film artists to do more of the same but with a certain refocusing: if straight children could fall in love with adults, why not gay kids?

In Maxi, writer Michiko Yamamoto, director Auraeus Solito, and producer Raymond Lee found a character so irresistible, they couldn't go wrong. And as played by young actor Nathan Lopez, the character is incredibly charismatic. It helps that despite his prettiness, Lopez plays the 12-year-old princess without affectation but with a freshness that could only come from the fact that he's straight.

It could not have been otherwise since Maxi lives in a straight, sordid world. His father (played brilliantly by Soliman Cruz) is a petty thief; he has passed on the trade to Maxi's "*brusko*" brothers, Boy (Neil Ryan Sese) and Bogs (Ping Medina). Maxi doesn't quite become Boney to this family of Clydes since he has stopped schooling in order to keep house and fill it with the scents of his merry cooking and the grace and charm of his presence.

When Maxi is rescued from neighborhood thugs by a kind rookie cop, Victor, (JR Valentin), he switches from bloody mama to damsel in distress. He finds himself smitten with the handsome cop to the point that he becomes prone to Victor's naïve attempts to pry information from him about his father and siblings. When they gang up on Victor to teach him a lesson, Maxi is horrified and comes to his rescue. He nurses Victor's bruises and steals a kiss from him.

But it cannot just end there. When Maxi tries to take the friendship to another level and writes Victor a love letter, the cop spurns him. Maxi doesn't quite react violently like the proverbial woman scorned; he merely cries on the shoulder of his brother, and the scene is perhaps the most heartbreaking in the movie.

But violence does happen. A changing of the guard in Victor's police precinct takes place. The new leader is more businesslike and he takes Victor under his wing, telling him he would teach him a more effective approach to law enforcement. It's only a matter of time until Victor presses the case again on Maxi's family. Their confrontation is bound to be bloody, and Maxi, despite his young years, must make the difficult decision.

All the right scenes

"Maximo Oliveros" serves up all the right scenes to depict the romantic dimensions of puppy love, and viewers may get lost in the swoon of love's fables and yearnings and the ether of childhood's daydreams and nebulas. The movie also provides titillating servings of a gay boy's secret life—the raid of women's wardrobe, the role-playing as a beauty contestant—that should be an eye-opener for everyone (there should be no discounting that kids, gay or straight, have secret lives and private fantasies).

Then there's the ticklish scene of Maxi stealing glances at the naked cop struggling to get into his underwear; this should perhaps generate a lot of academic papers on how the "male gaze," a postmodern critique on how women are stereotypically depicted as sex objects in movies by male directors, has been turned against itself: the macho gazer is exposed and commoditized by the gay gazer.

But the movie is really more than all of these.

The movie is a parable on violence. For all his cheerful disposition, both as a child and as somebody with "womanly" instincts, someone who, to apply an ancient haiku, fills an empty rice gourd with a beautiful flower, Maxi cannot avoid the assault of ugliness around him. His family is part of the underworld and he falls in love with a cop; his life is pregnant with potential and real violence. He's like the image of the flower at the start of the movie, floating defiantly amid the effluents of the urban sewage, a thing of beauty bound to be engulfed and crushed sooner or later.

It could be said that Maxi at least has the benefit of age, which allows him to be innocent. But the same innocence is reflected in Victor, played with quiet confidence and endearing unpretentiousness by JR Valentin. The greenhorn pounds his crooked beat armed with nothing but his idealism and incorruptibility. But he meets Maxi and it will only be a matter of time for his purity to be sullied and his high hopes of honest law enforcement to be frustrated. It is the innocent Maxi who crushes the cop's own innocence. When Maxi's family beats him up, he realizes that his badge and virtue cannot cow criminals. When a new police chief takes over and signals a new order, he learns that he must apply the ways of the criminal streets in order to stop lawbreakers. He finds out that he could only stick to the straight and narrow path by taking shortcuts.

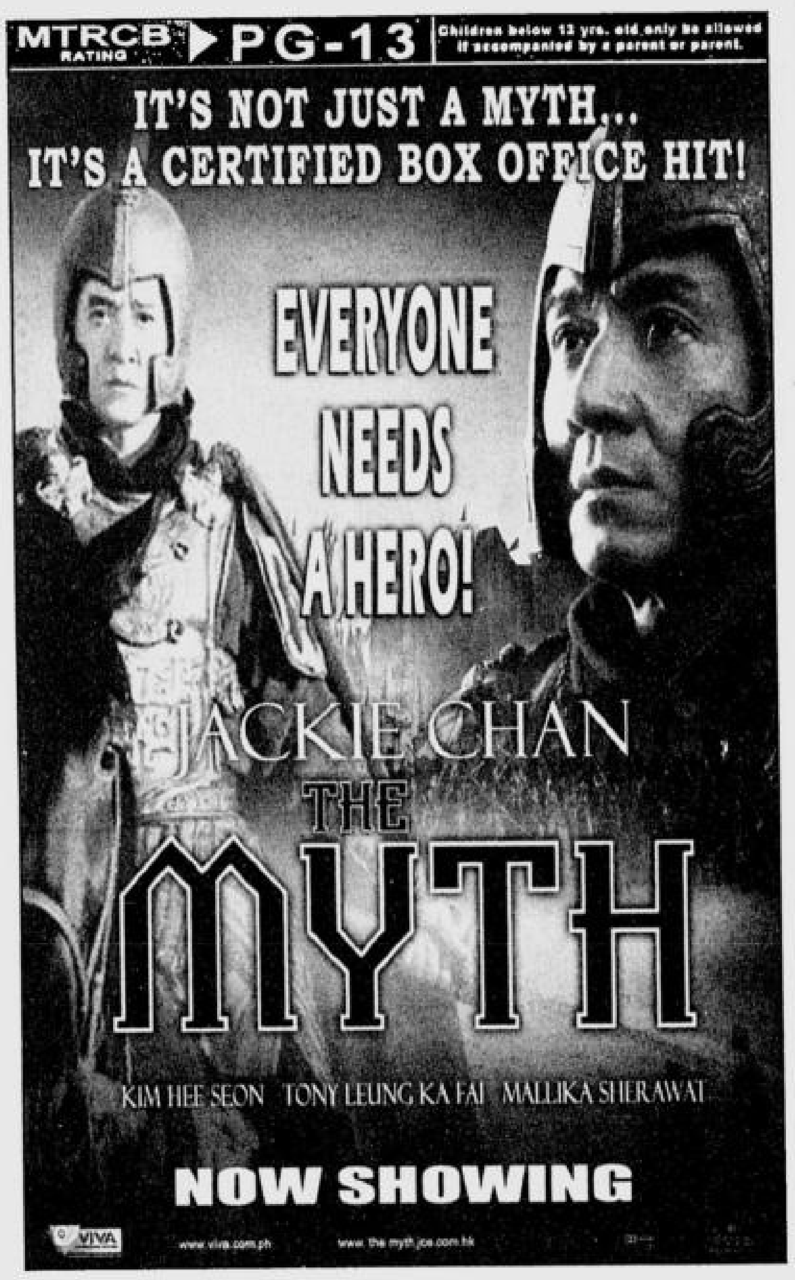
Inevitably, this is a movie about "family values." It is not so much about sexual orientation, about the "*bakla*" or "*shoke*" in Philippine society, but about the clannish relationships that underpin much of the Filipino's resilience and strength amid adversity, but also expose him to compromise, weakness and violence. Because he tends to them like their deceased mother, Maxi's siblings dote on him, and he becomes their princess, and he calls them "*kuya*." But when he makes the same connection with the cop, calling him "*Kuya* Victor," the stage is set for a collision between his family and the cop. It is only a matter of time for the "*padre de familia*" on both sides—Maxi's father and the new chief of police (also a father figure)—to square off like underworld bosses out to finally settle a score.

Garbo to the hilt

Perhaps it's Maxi's character that emerges as the stronger one. After all, as a minor, he is powerless to put a stop to the sheer play of bossism that governs the adult jungle. He sticks to his family but does not abide by the corrupt grown-up world. And perhaps Victor realizes this so that he seeks to make it up to Maxi. The final sequence has shades of the famous final sequence in Graham Greene and Carol Reed's "The Third Man," also a violent movie about the underworld. It shows Victor following Maxi around as the kid makes his way back to school. How the audience wishes for Maxi to stop and steal a glance at Victor, just as he did when the cop was taking a shower and changing underwear!

In a way their roles have been reversed. Because of his earnestness to reconcile with the kid, Victor seems smitten by Maxi, and Maxi plays Garbo to the hilt, impenetrable and detached, the remote object of desire and infatuation. If there's any resolution, it's one that is tentative but promising: their friendship may have blossomed into a new maturity.

(Lito B. Zulueta is the chair of the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino.)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② JUST LIKE HEAVEN
MTRCB.GP
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③ EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
MTRCB. PG-13
1.30. 4 20. 7 10. 10 00

④ HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE
MTRCB GP
12 15, 3.30, 6 45, 10.00

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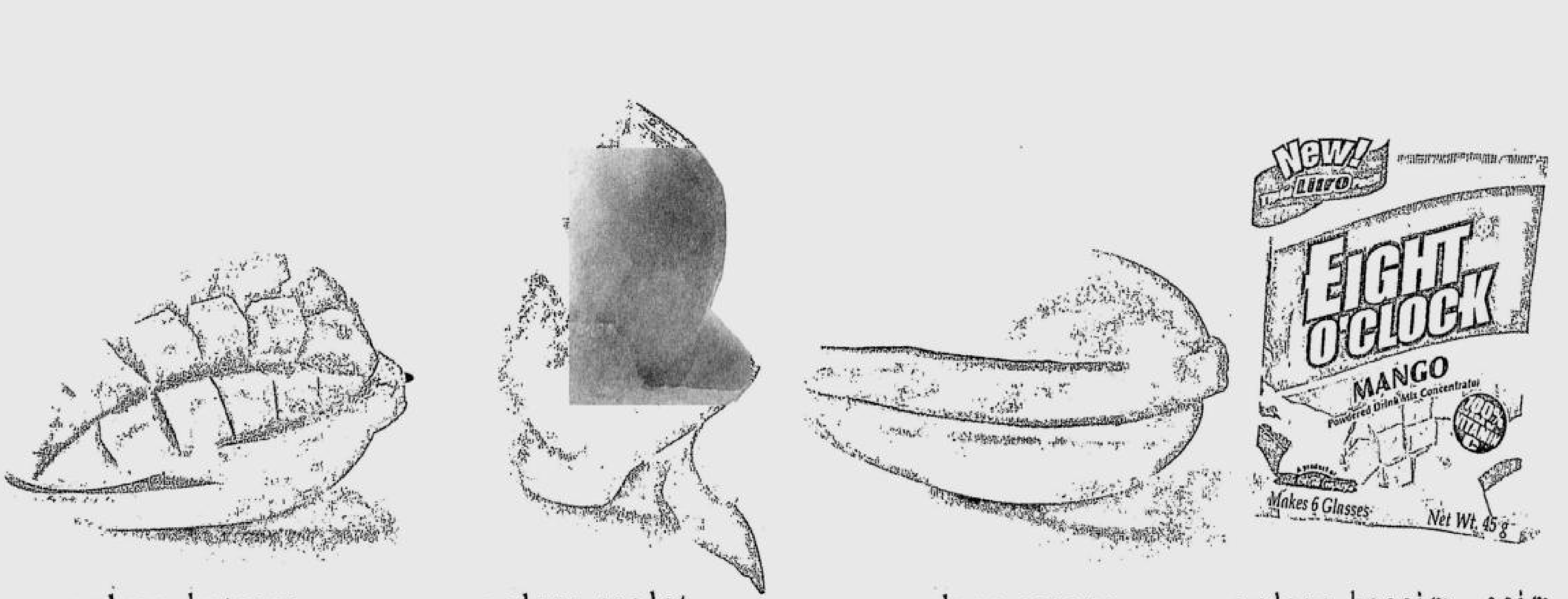

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Finance bucks GSIS monopoly of CTPL insurance

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE (DOF) DOES not favor plans of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) to monopolize the entire vehicle insurance business.

TEVES

"We want to see a healthy competition and not a monopoly," said Finance Secretary Margarito Teves in a briefing at the sidelines of the 2005 World Congress of Financial Executives yesterday in Makati City.

Teves said the DOF, head agency of the GSIS and the Insurance Commission (IC), would intervene in talks between the two institutions should the GSIS insist on its proposal of solely taking over the distribution of comprehensive third-party liability (CTPL) policies.

The finance secretary said the existence of competition among private insurance providers was still the ideal way of providing quality service to the public.

GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia had suggested to accredit only one issuer of CTPL policies, saying it was the best solution to the rampant sale of fraudulent policies.

Estimates showed that about P1.2 billion worth of fake policies were being sold every year to unsuspecting motorists.

Under the GSIS proposal, vehicle owners will simply pay the insurance coverage fee together with taxes and registration fees with the Land Transportation Office instead of buying CTPL policies from vendors outside the LTO premises.

But the IC has a different answer to the problem. Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo said her office and the members of the Pri-

FINANCE/ B4

Napocor eyes $500M in loans in '06

Improving finances seen cutting credit risks

STATE-OWNED NATIONAL Power Corp. (Napocor) intends to borrow $500 million both from the local and foreign markets next year mainly to pay off maturing obligations.

Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) president Nieves Osorio said Napocor would do the borrowings on its own and would no longer tap the national government to borrow on the power firm's behalf.

The national government used to float bonds on behalf of the cash-strapped utility, perceived as a big credit risk by creditors, to get lower premiums and therefore save on borrowing costs.

But in its latest P11-billion borrowing last month, Napocor floated its own bonds, which will mature in 2012, at a yield of 9.875 percent. National Treasurer Omar Cruz earlier said the yield was 50 basis points lower than what the national government had expected.

Napocor's latest domestic bond float brought its total borrowings for the year to $600 million. Of the amount, $400 million came from foreign sources, while $200 million was from local creditors

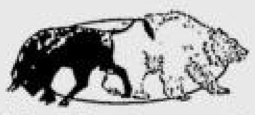
According to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, making Napocor raise its own financing needs would encourage fiscal discipline in the state-owned firm and help the national government focus on other concerns such as improving tax-collection efficiency.

"(Napocor) will handle the borrowings and we (national government) will just be a last resort. We will make sure that they don't go to us immediately," Teves told reporters in a briefing at the sidelines of the 2005 World Congress organized by the Finance Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex).

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in the same briefing that financial reforms undertak-

NAPOCOR/ B4

WHAT'S INSIDE



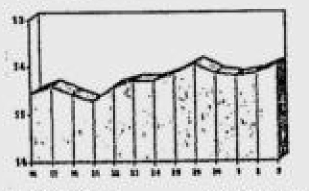
Market greets the new index /B2

New mine investments seen to draw $6B /B4

Sun Cellular to restrict 24/7 peak calls to one hour /B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱53.975 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 5, 2005

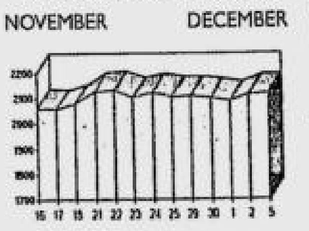
¥120.66 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 2, 2005

GOLD: $506.40-506.90
per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 5, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares close flat

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices closed little changed yesterday, finding support as gains in market heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) offset profit-taking elsewhere, dealers said.

They said the market was consolidating after last week's volatile trade.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index was up 1.41 points at 2,116.30 after trading between 2,111.82 and 2,123.92 on volume of 750 million shares worth P717.5 million.

The broader all-shares index gained 0.59 points at 1,279.16.

Losers led gainers 42 to 27, with 49 stocks unchanged.

"There was subdued selective buying in the market. However, this was offset by

SHARES/ B2

Maynilad takeover bad for gov't

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE METROPOLITAN Waterworks and Sewerage System's recent takeover of the debt-saddled west concession owned by Maynilad Water Services Inc. had been. disadvantageous to the national government, according to a report of the Commission on Audit.

The report, prepared by the office of COA State Auditor Norberto D. Cabibihan and given to the MWSS on Oct. 25, said the Debt and Capital Restructuring Agreement (DCRA) with Maynilad was "grossly disadvantageous" to the state-run agency.

"Based on the Dec. 31, 2004, audited financial statements of Maynilad, the company's ratio of current assets to current liabilities or its short-term solvency ratio is 0.224:1 or there is only P0.224 in current assets to cover for each P1 of currently maturing liabilities," the report indicated.

It further noted that this short-term solvency ratio was below par as a ratio of 2:1 was the satisfactory ratio.

"MWSI's Balance Sheet shows that Maynilad has P19 billion in debts that are due to mature within the next accounting cycle of 2005. However, current assets of the old Maynilad is not enough to cover these obligations. There are only P4.4 billion in liquid assets available to pay for these maturing loans," the COA report said.

The MWSS' agreement with Benpres Holdings not to state an event of termination in the next two years also allowed

MAYNILAD B4

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Market greets the new index

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED TO GARCI on his way to the Senate. He tripped and fell into a large bowl of custard. He was pulled out and taken in custardy.

This is a true story, which appeared in Bloomberg. The police was ordered to seek and arrest a top member of the Jemaah Islamiyah Group. He should be easy to find because he had both arms amputated. Shortly afterward, the police arrested a suspect who also had both arms amputated but after interrogating him for some time, they became convinced he was the wrong guy. "We released him," said the police, "because he was armless."

The foreign exchange reserves should rise sharply this week because the Treasury is melting down the 113 gold medals won in the S.E.A. Games.

All holidays, regardless of when they fall, are being designated to fall on a Monday. This is a conspiracy to stop me from writing, as I cannot get my articles typed because the office is closed. So I have either to send them out on a Wednesday or skip that week. I only type with my left index finger, reserving the right index finger for the shift key and the space bar. I tried using both fingers, but found it difficult to get my right foot on the shift key. An amendment is currently before the House. If passed, Good Friday and Ash Wednesday will also fall on a Monday.

Italy has an IPO similar to First Gen. It is called Italia Gen. Unfortunately, its e-mail address is powergenitalia.com.

* * *

LAST week, the market was pretty boring and continued its downward drift from Monday to Thursday when the new Phisix appeared. Five poor-performing stocks were removed and replaced by five blue chips, three of them IPOs. Four of the stocks were obvious replacements but I was surprised at the inclusion of Piltel, not because I have anything against the company, but Smart owns 92 percent so the float is only 8 percent.

The index will be revised again in April with particular attention given to the float and liquidity. First Gen ought to be added as it will be a large and important company with a float of 20 to 25 percent, depending on the demand and the IPO price. However, the PSE might defer it a later date because of its brief record. Some companies such as Lepanto have a weighting of only 0.2 percent and is therefore irrelevant. Any company with weighting of less than 1 percent is not worth including.

On Friday, the stock market suddenly woke up to what was going on around it. The Nasdaq and the S&P 500 were at a 5-year high, GDP had accelerated from 3.3 percent in the first half to 4.3 percent without undue inflation. Over the weekend, 215,000 new jobs have been added and personal spending increased by 0.4 percent in November. Another rate hike is expected on Dec. 13 to 4.25 percent and Fed Chair Greenspan retires with the economy in good shape.

Elsewhere, Japan is benefiting from the weak yen, which helps exports and boosts profits and the Nasdaq is also at a 5-year high. As the U.S. and Japan are currently the two largest economies in the world, this bodes well for Asian exporters. Unfortunately, we are not one of them as we merely import, assemble and re-export. Consequently, while other countries' exports are booming, ours remain at a low level well into the first half of 2006.

Two months ago, I recommended Philex, first in the newsletter and then in the INQUIRER. I also predicted in the newsletter that gold would hit $500 an ounce before the year ends and advised readers either to buy gold, if this is permitted, or PXB as an alternative. Since then, the shares have risen 60 percent and a loss has been converted into a substantial profit in the 3rd quarter. With all hedge positions closed this month, PX will be able to sell its gold at an 18-year high and copper at an all-time high. Next year's results should be much better and I would not be surprised to see PXB at P2.50 this time next year.

I think this is an appropriate time to retell the story of how I made money in the gold boom in April 1980. I was running the Investment Department of Laing and Cruickshank, now Credit Lyonnais. On the wall was a long-term chart of gold, which my predecessor had plotted for many years. For decades, the U.S. Treasury pegged gold at $35 an ounce, and kept a vast horde at Fort Knox. Eventually, demand exceeded supply, with the French and the Arabs buying large amounts in preference to holding currency. Eventually, the horde at Fort Knox was depleted and the price was allowed to find its own level.

It rose immediately to more than $100. In the years that followed, the price kept rising until it reached $420, then it fell back to $350 as South Africa and Russia released their production. It again rose to $420 but fell back to $380. It hit $420 again, but slipped to $400. I was well into technical analysis by then and realized that $420 was a resistance level, the price at which both countries kept selling their annual production. If only this resistance level could be broken.

In England, citizens were not allowed to hold physical gold, but could buy South African gold shares, which were traded freely on the London Stock Market and in Johannesburg. I gave what appeared to be a lunatic order. BUY gold shares across the board if the metal price closed above $420. I took out a large mortgage on my house, sold the wife and kids, and put everything I possessed into gold shares. I reasoned correctly that if the resistance level were broken, it would mean that there were still unsatisfied buyers but no more gold available to sell.

The theory proved correct. With my money fully invested, I watched the gold price jumped to $450, then $500. I started taking Valium 2mg to calm my nerves. It continued daily up to $550, $600, $650 and by then I had graduated to taking Valium 5mg. After it went to $700, $750, $800 in only 17 trading days, I was taking Valium 10mg like candy.

Next morning, a well-known financial newspaper had a headline that a firm of gold experts predicted that gold would reach $2000. I realized that euphoria had swept through the market and I sold, right at the top, tripling my leveraged investment. I quit my well-paid job and devoted my life to technical analysis.

Apart from the bit about selling the wife and kids, the rest of the story is absolutely accurate. Soon after I sold, gold went down to $500, and it continued down to $260, where it remained for a very long time. *Goldfinger@hotmale.com*

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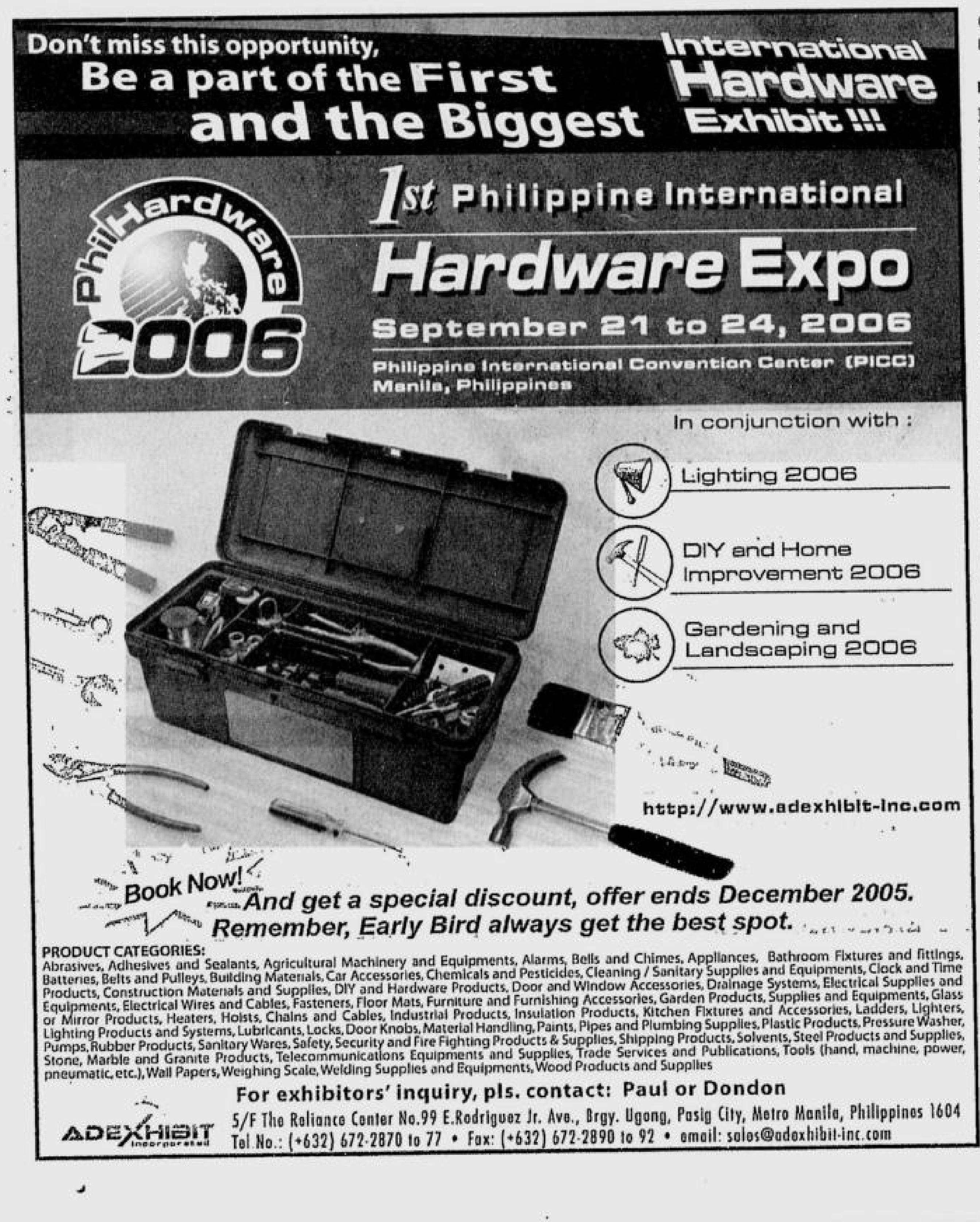

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Shares

From page B1

profit-taking in other (stocks)," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities Inc.

Dealers said they had been expecting a firmer tone this week after Friday's strong performance but at current levels some stocks are beginning to look expensive.

"The market is now in a consolidation mode but with an upward bias. Technical charts show some (stocks) are in overbought territory," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings Inc.

Top-traded Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. advanced a peso to P33 while Banco de Oro Universal Bank was up a peso at P34.

PLDT was the main mover, ending P20 higher at P1,775, tracking the rise of its US-listed shares on Friday, dealers said.

PLDT unit Pilipino Telephone Corp. (Piltel) advanced 15 centavos to P3.65 as investors picked up on its improving balance sheet, dealers said.

Ayala Corp. fell P5 to P345 while unit, Globe Telecom was down P10 at P750. Ayala Land Inc. shed 10 centavos at P9.50. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 5, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	33.5	34	33.5	34	165,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59.5	60	58.5	59	1,321,100
China Banking Corp.	605	605	605	605	140
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	220,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54	54	54	54	600
International Exch. Bank	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	39,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	33	32	33	4,457,400
Philippine National Bank	30	32	30	31	133,100
Phil. Savings Bank	36	36	36	36	200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	14	14	22,000
Security Bank Corp.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	506,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	30	30	30	30	7,600
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	24.5	25.5	24.5	25.5	2,800
Manulife Financial Corp.	3155	3160	3155	3160	640
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	507,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2160	2195	2160	2195	1,530
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	14	14	14	14	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.92	0.94	0.92	0.94	640,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	750	760	750	750	99,000
Ipeople Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	647,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	1,100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	2,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.55	3.7	3.55	3.65	9,142,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. .	1755	1775	1755	1775	36,040
Ivantage Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.55	0.55	3,850,000
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.015	0.015	68,300,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15.5	15	15	21,400
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24	23.5	23.5	146,500
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	1,914,000
Petron Corp.	4.55	4.6	4.5	4.5	4,103,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	30,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.94	450,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	158,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	50,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	27,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.71	0.73	0.7	0.72	4,300,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.95	4	3.95	4	2,656,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	18,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.5	24.5	24.25	24.25	44,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	42	42	41.5	42	44,200
Pancake House Inc.	3.7	3.75	3.7	3.75	56,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65	64	64.5	46,800
San Miguel Corp. B	88	88	86.5	88	42,100
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10	10	10	10	1,000
Universal Robina Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	3,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	260,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	350	350	345	345	47,490
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	50,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.85	1,829,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.12	2.12	424,000
APC Group Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.235	1,000,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	25,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.91	0.92	0.91	0.92	1,360,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	1,590,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	4,049,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	140,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.33	7,200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.25	3.3	797,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	1,600,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	21,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	49.5	50	49.5	50	569,400
House Of Investments Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	1,010,000
Ionics Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	10,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.64	1.68	1.64	1.68	228,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	1,656,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.35	13,080,000
Paxys Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	368,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.16	70,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	120,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	10,000
SM Investments Corp.	243	247	243	246	105,960
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	400,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	110,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	30,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	51,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	10,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.08	0.075	0.08	2,100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	1,600,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	10	10	9	9	2,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	693,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	600,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.75	14	13.75	14	176,400
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	1,100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	124,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	211,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	118,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	1,610,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	40,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.44	9,240,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.36	1.36	2,758,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.215	2,960,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.5	1,140,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6	6	6	6	2,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	10,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.42	291,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	9,395,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1	1.02	1	1	320,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	2,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6	6.2	6	6	260,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	39,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.58	180,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.22	4,640,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	6,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	197,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.03	157,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	161,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.66	1.66	1.62	1.64	1,383,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28	28	27.5	27.5	137,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	1,300,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	171,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	10,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.85	3.9	3.85	3.9	14,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	2,650,000

DISCLOSURES

BOULEVARD Holdings Inc. elected as directors Jose Marcel Panlilio, Lorenzo Tañada III, Nicole Morris, Alfredo Joaquin, Mario Cristobal and Antero Jose Caganda. Elected independent directors were Reynaldo Maulit, Victor Benavidez and Ricardo Pascua. Panlilio was later voted chairman and president.

***

THE Securities and Exchange Commission implemented yesterday a trading halt on the shares of C & P Homes, Inc., following reports the SEC had approved the company's plan to raise its authorized capital stock from P500 million to P7 billion. The lifting of the trading suspension will follow once the company has submitted its disclosure on the said SEC approval, and the Exchange's approval of the reduction of listed shares pursuant to capital restructuring.

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SAN Miguel Corp. will hold its regular stockholders' meeting on May 9, 2006. The deadline for the submission of nominations is on January 20, while the record date for stockholders who will be entitled to vote is on March 17.

Compiled by Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

December 5, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.853242	1.000000	54.2220
Japan	Yen	0.007080	0.008298	0.4499
United Kingdom	Pound	1.478754	1.733100	93.9721
Hongkong	Dollar	0.110036	0.128962	6.9926
Switzerland	Franc	0.648065	0.759532	41.1833
Canada	Dollar	0.734667	0.861030	46.6868
Singapore	Dollar	0.505416	0.592347	32.1182
Australia	Dollar	0.635941	0.745323	40.4129
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.265346	2.654985	143.9586
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.227513	0.266645	14.4580
Brunei	Dollar	0.503923	0.590598	32.0234
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000100	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020635	0.024184	1.3113
UAE	Dirham	0.232314	0.272272	14.7631
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.172000	63.5482
Argentina	Peso	0.286804	0.336134	18.2259
Brazil	Real	0.387926	0.454649	24.6520
Denmark	Kroner	0.134204	0.157287	8.5284
India	Rupee	0.018504	0.021687	1.1759
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.225815	0.264655	14.3501
Mexico	New Peso	0.081496	0.095513	5.1789
New Zealand	Dollar	0.604879	0.708918	38.4390
Norway	Kroner	0.126329	0.148058	8.0280
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014266	0.016720	0.9066
South Africa	Rand	0.134738	0.157913	8.5624
Korea	Won	0.000822	0.000963	0.0522
Sweden	Kroner	0.106077	0.124322	6.7410
Syria	Pound	0.016437	0.019264	1.0445
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025481	0.029864	1.6193
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000398	0.000466	0.0253

Q1-Q3 coco exports up 6.6% to 1.44 MT

By Ronnel W. Domingo

COCONUT EXPORTS FROM THE FIRST QUARTER to the third quarter went up 6.6 percent to about 1.44 million metric tons, according to an industry umbrella group.

The United Coconut Associations of the Philippines said preliminary figures indicated a "modest" expansion of exports from January to September compared to the 1.35 million MT exported in the same period last year.

The Ucap reported that the six-month growth streak ended in September, when shipments dropped by 21.4 percent to 161,837 MT from 205,974 MT in the same month last year.

Up to the end of September, exporters shipped out 761,733 MT of coconut oil; 285,049 MT of copra meal; 92,498 MT of desiccated coconut, and 92,402 MT of the copra equivalent of oleochemicals.

The numbers mean that coconut oil exports grew by 4.2 percent and copra meal by 3.8 percent.

In September, overall coconut exports decreased, ending six months of continued growth, the group said.

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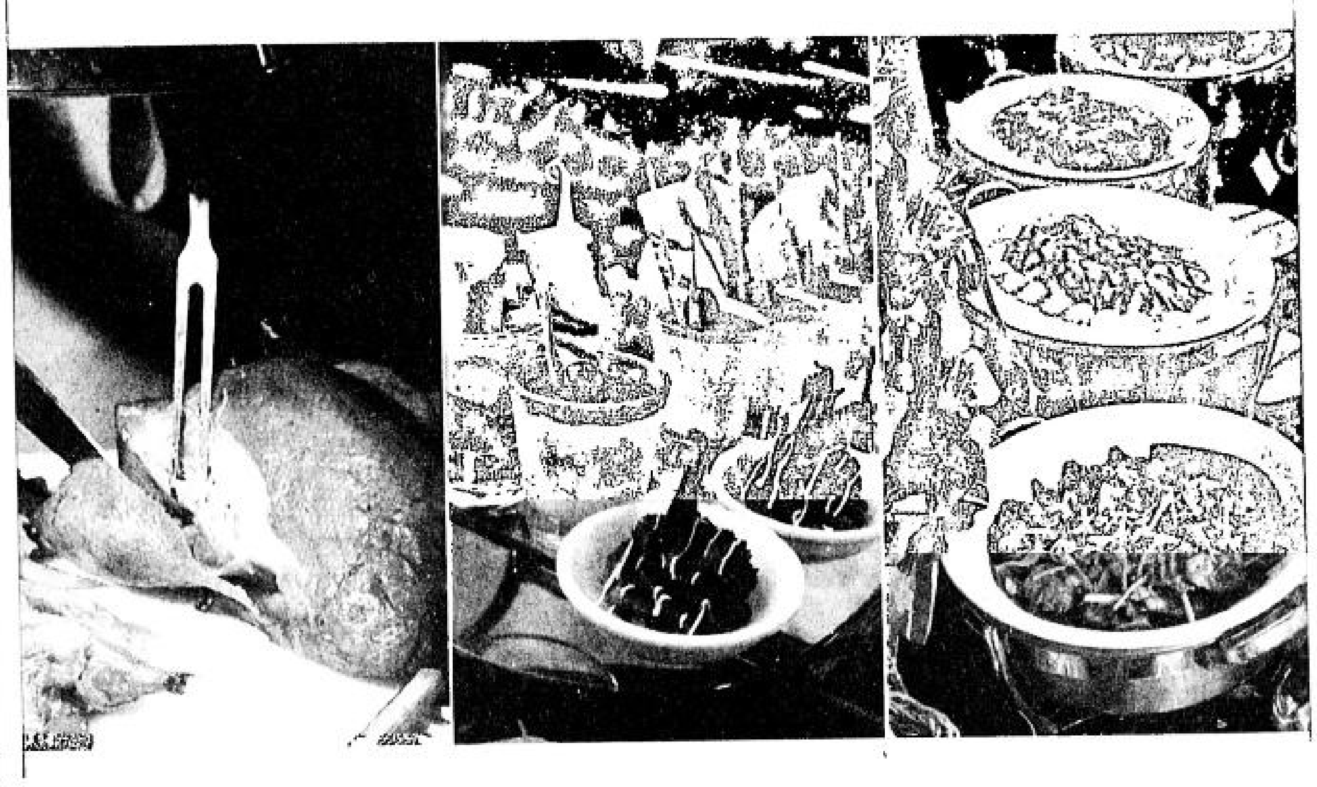

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Bid to import duty-free corn turned down

By Christine A. Gaylican

A DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE committee rejected the proposal of feed millers to import 100,000 metric tons of corn to augment the expected shortfall in corn supply.

The inter-agency committee on rice and corn has decided that the feed millers should first tap the minimum access volume (MAV) allocated for corn, which remains underutilized this year.

"An assessment report showed that only 0.12 percent of the MAV volumes have been utilized by the private sector," said a DA official.

The official said the committee did not agree to the importation of the commodity because it ran counter to the government effort to raise additional revenue.

Corn imports within the minimum access volume—pegged at 212,119 metric tons—are slapped a tariff of 35 percent. Imports exceeding the allowed MAV among member-countries of the World Trade Organization are charged with a 50 percent tariff.

Antonio R. Moraza of the Philippine Association of Feed Millers Inc. said his group would appeal the decision.

The tight corn supply has raised prices at the farmgate to around P11 a kilo from P8. The drought that hit corn producers in Cagayan Valley and Isabela had reduced potential harvests to less than 5 million metric tons this year.

New mine investments seen to draw $6B

Several mineral projects lined up for the next five years

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE COUNTRY IS BACK ON THE radar screens of foreign mining companies, according to Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia (CLSA), the equity research arm of French bank Calyon.

Alfred Dy, head of CLSA's Philippine Research said mining firms have taken another look at the mining industry after a shift in government policy towards active promotion of the sector, and the recent Supreme Court ruling upholding the legality of foreign ownership of mining projects.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau expects investments in the Philippine mining industry to reach $581 million in 2006 and $1.5 billion in 2007.

Citing Chamber of Mines data, Dy said the country could lure in new investments worth $6 billion over the next five years.

Some 23 projects have also been earmarked for potential development between 2005 and 2009, requiring capital investment of about $6.34 billion.

"Significant investment committments in 2005 have been made at the Rapu Rapu Polymetallic Project of Australian-listed Lafayette Mining in Albay, the Canatuan Silver-Gold Project of TVI Resources in Zamboanga del Norte, the Alde Cement Project of Eagle Cement Corp. in Bulacan and the Sto. Tomas II Copper Expansion Project of Philex Mining in Benguet," Dy said.

But according to the CLSA official, even with investors taking a second look at the Philippine mining sector, it may take some more time and effort before investor confidence can be fully restored.

"The new law (allowing foreign investments in the sector) has yet to be fully tested in the courts, and political instability remains a key risk to investment and progress in the sector," Dy said. "A change in government could significantly lengthen approval time due to disruptions and discontinuity of policy."

Dy also said that based on the observations of foreign mining executives, the key attractions to investing in the Philippines include: abundant under-explored prospective tenements, government support for the industry, ample supply of skilled English speaking, low-cost labor, close proximity to China, one of the largest economies in the world, and financial incentives, including tax holidays.

"Our analysis indicates that the Philippine mining sector is headed for a strong recovery, fueled by foreign investment," Dy wrote. "We expect investments to continue pouring in on the heels of the government move to adopt a pro-mining stance and expectations for an extended cycle of high commodity prices."

Sun Cellular to restrict 24/7 peak calls to one hour

By Clarissa S. Batino

SUN CELLULAR OF DIGITEL MOBILE Philippines Inc. appears to be having second thoughts about its unlimited sales pitch.

Sun Cellular said it would soon impose a one-hour limit to its supposedly unlimited call and text pricing plan called 24/7.

The mobile phone firm, which set off a price war in the industry with its bucket pricing, said the restriction was only meant to curb abuses resulting in network congestion during peak hours. It stressed that it was not a departure from the unlimited plan.

The Gokongwei carrier is asking the National Telecommunications Commission to allow it to introduce a "fair use policy" where a prepaid subscriber will only have a maximum of one hour of talk time between 6 p.m. and midnight.

"In the event that the subscriber exceeds the cumulative usage of one hour, the unlimited calling service shall be disabled for the remainder of the peak period," said Sun Cellular in its letter to the NTC. "It will be made available again (at the start) of the next day."

Calls during off peak hours are automatically cut after several minutes. But the subscriber can redial as many times as he wants to.

Sun Cellular will make presentations to the commission this week to defend its new policy.

"Usage statistics show that 80 percent of subscribers who call during peak hours have an average of less than an hour of cumulative use, while 20 percent have an average of more than one hour," said Sun Cellular.

It said a minority of subscribers have been monopolizing access to the facilities to the "detriment" of the majority.

Within-network text messaging is still free and unlimited all day.

Sun Cellular said within-network traffic goes up starting 6 p.m. and peaks between 9 and 11 p.m.

The Gokongwei carrier said as of August, subscribers still stood at 1.88 million, or the same number as in June.

Finance bucks GSIS . . .

From page B1

vate Insurers and Reinsurers Association (Pira) were designing a facility that would serve as a clearinghouse for CTPL policies being sold.

The clearinghouse system will require vehicle owners to pay the amount of CTPL policies only to banks, and therefore prevent unscrupulous vendors from defrauding vehicle owners.

She said the establishment of a clearinghouse was a preferable solution because it would avoid the displacement of about 130,000 employees of private insurance companies, which would be forced out of business should the GSIS plan be adopted.

With the DOF against the GSIS' proposal of a monopoly, Escobillo expressed confidence that the industry reform pushed by the IC and the Pira would be implemented in January next year.

Former Insurance Commissioner Benjamin Santos was pushing for the establishment of a consortium of insurance companies that would be accredited to sell CTPL policies.

Maynilad takeover bad for gov't

From page B1

the nonpayment of some P6.32 billion of concession fees by Maynilad, which the national government was now bound to pay for, the report said.

Under the rehabilitation plan, the government-owned MWSS has agreed to own 84 percent of the debt-ridden private water company by converting into equity some $22.67 million of Maynilad's outstanding concession fees.

The plan obligates MWSS to put in $31 million in fresh capital into the water concession.

"To provide financial assistance is not within the acts of MWSS [as] enumerated within its Charter," the COA report pointed out.

The MWSS, it said, could source the funding for financial assistance from the proceeds of a planned World Bank loan, but it would bear the burden of paying interest and other commitment fees to the bank, including foreign exchange losses.

"This is prejudicial to the MWSS because if in turn it could not obtain the said World Bank funding, it becomes a liability of the MWSS," the COA report stated.

Ranking officials of the MWSS said in a separate interview that to prevent the national government from paying the $31 million, it was preparing the terms to bid out the concession to a new investor.

"Interested parties DMCI Holdings and the ING Barings consortium are conducting due-diligence audit now," the official said.

Napocor eyes $500M in loans . . .

From page B1

en by the power firm would help reduce the risk premiums normally sought by creditors.

Osorio said Napocor, after suffering from P117 billion in losses in 2003 and P29.9 billion in 2004, might already break even this year. Osorio said the decline in losses was partly due to power rate increases granted by the Energy Regulatory Commission. She added that should oil prices become favorable next year, Napocor could begin posting profits.

She said the power firm would try to lessen its dependence on the national government, which was facing its own fiscal problem.

Early this year, the national government absorbed P200 billion worth of Napocor debts in observance of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira). The law required the national government to absorb P200 billion of Napocor's debts to meet the objective of reforming the country's power sector. *Michelle V. Remo*

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PART 1. READING AWARENESS CELEBRATION 2005
6:00 am Assembly of Motorcade Participants
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7:00 am Thanksgiving Prayer
Guest Priest
7:30 am Products distributions and sponsors
CMAP member-publications and sponsors
8:00 am Start of the "Reading Awareness Celebration" motorcade
10:00 am Registration of participants, guests and sponsors
Manila Zoo Entrance Gate, Manila
12:00 nn Lunch break

PART2. THE 3RD ANNUAL CMAP VENDORS CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL
1:00 am Program Proper
- Singing of the Philippine National Anthem
  Mr. Dante s. Castro – Malaya
- Invocation
  Ms. Rosalinda A. Fernando – CHAP Incorporator
- Welcome Remarks
  Mr. Jess H. Mallare – CMAP President of Manila Bulletin
- Introduction of the Guest Speaker
  Mr. Bienvenido B. Baltazar – Philippine Daily Inquirer
- Inspirational Talk – Guest Speaker
- Closing Remarks
  Mr. Lito Minor – Abante
2:00 pm (onwards) Animal Show / Parlor Games / Various Activities / Prizes / Surprises

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Deadline for submission of offers will be on **December 14, 2005** on or before **12:00 noon.**

For more information, you can visit our warehouse located at the **BTM Complex, 1281 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City**, or you can contact **Ms. Jane Fatima Valdez at (+632) 416-4213** or **Mr. Arji P. Obmerga** at **(+63917) 852-0406**.

We assume no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify parties for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the offer.

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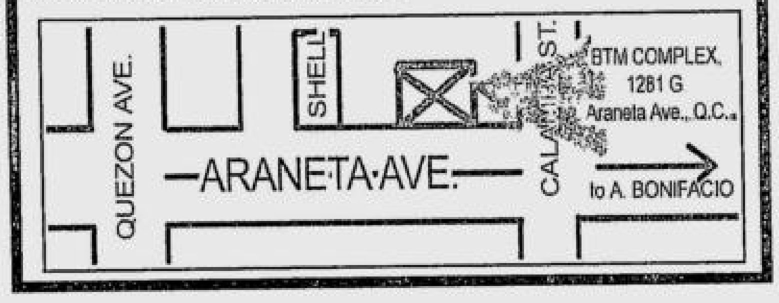

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Quezon
Municipality of Catanauan
OFFICE OF THE BAC CHAIRMAN
Second Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDP II)

INVITATION TO RE-BID

December 6, 2005
World Bank/IBRD Loan No. 7152-PH

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of the ARCDPII and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the following contract located at Barangay San Roque Anusan and Milagrosa, Municipality of Catanauan, Province of Quezon. The Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guideline: Procurement under IBRD Loan and IDA Credits.

The Municipality of Catanauan, Province of Quezon and implementing partner of DAR for ARCDPII invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Rehabilitation of 2.00 kms. San Roque-Milagrosa Farm to Market Road under Contract No. RIRR 04 035 01 RES-Q.

Project Duration : 120 Calendar Days
Bidding Documents : PHP 5,000.00
Minimum Bid Security : PhP 80,000.00
Bid Closing Date : January 05, 2006 Time 10:00 AM.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:

Item No.	Scope of Works	Quantity	Unit
12	Roadway and Drainage Excavation	6,767.40	sq.m.
13	Structural Excavation	61.50	cu.m.
14(2)	Embankment	3,335.40	cu.m.
20	Aggregate Sub-Base Course	1,200.00	cu.m.
21	Aggregate Base Course	1,080.00	cu.m.
31	Portland Cement Concrete Pavement	800.00	sq.m
50A	Underdrains (610 mm dia. RCP)	48.00	lm.
50B	Underdrains (1200mm dia. RCP)	24.00	lm.
51(2)	Riprap & Grouted Riprap	19.20	cu.m.
52	Stone Masonry	69.11	cu.m.

Minimum Equipments Required

Bulldozer (1 unit)-owned; Road Roller Vibratory Compactor (9 ton min. 1 unit)-owned; Road Grader (1 unit)-owned; Loader (1 unit)-owned; Dump Truck (4 units)-owned; Backhoe (1 unit)-owned or lease; Water truck (1 unit)-owned; Bagger mixer (1 unit)-owned; Concrete Vibrator (1 unit)-owned ; survey instruments- leased/owned

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested bidders at the BAC Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Catanauan, Province of Quezon starting December 7, 2005 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PhP5,000.00 for each set. Pre-bid conference will be held in the same address on December 23, 2005 at 10:00 AM.

Bids shall be valid for a period of 90 days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a bid security of PhP 84,000.00 in form; Cash, Certified Check, Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee, on a free convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the BAC Secretariat Office, Municipality of Catanauan, Province of Quezon, on or before the Bid closing date on January 5, 2006 at 10:00 AM, at which time the Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

The LGU-BAC ARCDPII of Catanauan, Quezon reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate indemnity to the contractor/bidder for any expenses that they may incur in the preparation of bid and to accept the lowest evaluated, responsive and complying bid.

(SGD) REBECCA D. I. FLORIDA
Chairman, LGU BAC-ARCDP II

(PDI – December 6, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ARCADIA R. IMPELIDO was extrajudicially settled with SPA on Nov.14, 2005 per Doc#12501, Page#1374, Book#15, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Danilo B. Bañares of Manila
(PDI-Nov. 22, 29 & Dec. 06, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that Petron Corp. Stock Certificates 0035542, 00647010, 01177364 and 01396542 representing 3018 shares and issued from 1994 to 1997 in the name of Francisco Alcuaz Jr. were lost. If no contest received, new certificates will be issued (PDI-November 29, Dec. 6 & 13, 2005)

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

QUEZON CITY

November 30, 2005

ANNOUNCEMENT

TO: ALL RICE BASED FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS (FOS) AND ALL OTHER SECTORS INTERESTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RICE IMPORTATION PROGRAM FOR 2006:

IN ADDITION TO MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR A02K511-003 DATED NOVEMBER 16, 2005, THE 100,000 MT RICE IMPORTATION ALLOCATED TO FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND THE 38,000 MT ALLOCATED TO ALL OTHER SECTORS SHOULD BE IMPORTED ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS FROM THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES.

SOURCE COUNTRIES	ALLOCATION (MT)
THAILAND	98,000
CHINA	25,000
AUSTRALIA	15,000
TOTAL	138,000

THE PAYMENT OF THE PARTIAL/FULL ADVANCE DUTIES/TARIFF SHALL BE THE BASIS OF DETERMINING THE FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED RULE. ALSO, ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATION FOR IMPORTING LICENSE SHALL START ON JANUARY 2, 2006

FOR YOUR GUIDANCE.

(Sgd.) GREGORIO Y. TAN, JR.
Administrator

(PDI - Dec. 6, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

Re-Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Provision of Insurance Packages to NFA Employees for year 2006

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*, through its *2006 Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of *P21,122,469.50* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *the provision of Insurance Packages to NFA Employees for year 2006*, as follows:

Lot	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Particulars
1	Group Hospitalization Insurance Program	14,000,000.00
2	Executive Health Care Program	1,100,000.00
3	Group Accident Insurance Program	1,307,059.50
4	Group Term Life Insurance	4,715,410.00
	TOTAL	21,122,469.50

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *provision of Insurance Packages to NFA Employees for year 2006.* Period of coverage is January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY-BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P5,000.00. The method of payment will be *CASH*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

Prospective bidders who secured the bidding documents for the failed bidding of December 2, 2005 are no longer required to pay anew the non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 for the bid documents.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on** ***December 13, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the *NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.*

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the ***NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City*** **on December 27, 2005** from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.. Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in either of the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on ***December 27, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the *NFA Boardroom, 10th floor, Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity – *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contact Persons – *Jose D. Chua / Violeta S. Villarama*
Address – *101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City*
Telephone No. – *(632) 712-3341 loc. 8923 or 8520*
e-mail address – *vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Fax No. – *(632) 712-0454*
Website – *www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI – December 6 & 13, 2005)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

OUTSOURCE ADVANTAGE CORPORATION is a land-based private recruitment and placement agency managed by its Finance and Admin Manager, Mr. Danilo G. Samonte, whose picture appears below.

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(PDI—Dec. 6, 2005)

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Inocencia Nava Vallejo

of San Miguel Village, Makati City

Died in the peace of our Lord on December 5, 2005 at the age of 98.

Her loving children **Tessie** and **Gus Lagman**, **Marilou** and **Eric Gatchalian**; grandchildren **Katrina** and **Felipe**, **Vanessa** and **Jason**, **Niki**, **Erik**, **Maricae** and **Miko**; great-grandchildren **Andre**, **Ava**, **Usha** and **Amaya**.

Her remains lie in state at Premiere Suite 1, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

There will be a 10 a.m. Mass on Wednesday, December 7, 2005 at St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Reposo St., Bel-Air Village, Makati City, before the interment.

> "I am the Resurrection and the Life,
> whoever believes in Me, though he dies, shall live."
> John 11:25

In Loving Memory of

Antonio C. Delgado

Masses will be offered tomorrow, Wednesday on the 13th anniversary of his death, December 7, 2005.

San Beda College Chapel Alabang, Muntinlupa City	6:15 a.m.
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish N. Garcia St. cor. Kalayaan Ave., Bel-Air II, Makati City	6:30 a.m. 6:30 p.m.
St. John Bosco Parish Arnaiz Street, Makati City	6:30 a.m. 7:30 p.m.
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Broadway Street, New Manila, Quezon City	7:00 a.m.
Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (Manila Cathedral), Intramuros, Manila	7:00 a.m. 12:10 p.m.
Our Lady of Peace & Good Voyage Antipolo, Rizal	8:00 a.m.
Sta. Maria Goretti Parish Church Pius XII Catholic Center, U.N. Avenue, Paco, Manila	12:00 noon
Makati Medical Center Chapel 9F Makati Medical Center, Makati City	12:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.
National Shrine of the Sacred Heart Dao Street, San Antonio Village, Makati City	12:15 p.m.
Minor Basilica San Lorenzo Ruiz Binondo, Manila	12:15 p.m.
Sto. Niño de Paz Chapel Greenbelt Park, Makati City	5:45 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio McKinley Road, North Forbes Park, Makati City	6:00 p.m.
San Agustin Church Intramuros, Manila	6:00 p.m.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved

Maria Luz "Bayang" Fabian vda. de Fernandez

of Tarlac City
(15 August 1917 - 06 December 2003)
On the occasion of her
2nd Death Anniversary
We would like to request relatives, friends & readers to remember her in your prayer.

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.

Tel. Nos. Q.C.: 712-3001 • 743-6502
Manila – 711-6931 to 35

NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION	
		DATE & TIME	PLACE
Vicente Hao Chin Sr.	Superior, 1 & 2, Q.C.	12/06/05; 1:00 p.m.	Chinese Crematory
Mariquita E. Salcedo	Chapel B, Q.C.	12/06/05; 9:00 a.m.	North Cemetery
Mario P. Macayan	Chapel 14, Q.C.	12/8/2005; 10:00 a.m.	Himlayang Pilipino

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In Loving Memory of

LOURDES BERMEJO

On her 1st Death Anniversary on December 6, 2005

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches:

St. Bernard's Catholic Church, *Tracy, CA*	Dec. 5, 2005	5:30 PM
Blue Army Shrine, *Washington, NJ*	Dec. 5, 2005	12:00 NN
Sto. Rosario Parish Church *San Pedro, Laguna*	Dec. 6, 2005	7:30 PM
San Lorenzo Parish Church *San Pedro, Laguna*	Dec. 6, 2005	7:15 PM
St. Peregrine Laziosi Parish *Tunasan, Muntinlupa*	Dec. 6, 2005	7:00 PM
Poor St. Clare Monastery *Cabuyao, Laguna*	Dec. 6, 2005	all day Mass

The family requests relatives and friends to join them in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

> "I have fought the good fight;
> I have finished the race;
> I have kept the faith."
> 2 Timothy 4:7

ARTURO SAMSON ARCE

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 3, 2005 at the age of 65.

His bereaved wife **MILAGROS**, children **ARMIDA**, **RAYMUND**, **ROY**, mother **LUTGARDA**, brothers, sisters, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City and will be transferred to Funeraria Pabilao, Lucena City on Thursday, December 8, 2005.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 11, 2005, 1:00 p.m. at the Heaven's Garden, Tayabas, Quezon.

ERNESTO V. MILAN

of Bangan, La Union & Proj. 4, Q. C.
(Died Dec 4, 2005 – Age 53)

His beloved brothers and sisters **Mely**, **Tony**, **Imelda**, **Perla**, **Mario**, **Brenda**, **Roland** & **Erlinda**; brothers and sisters-in-law; nephews and nieces request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Holy Trinity Chapel Loyola, Marikina City.

Interment will be on December 8, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 am Holy Mass.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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CLASSIFIEDS

National Power Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Imported Steaming Coal to Sual CFTPP Batch II, CY 2006

1. The National Power Corporation now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the above supply.
2. It intends to apply the sum as shown below being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC), inclusive of maximum loading tolerance:

Batch II Schedule-Plant	Volume, MT	Approved Budget for the Contract Inclusive of Maximum Loading Tolerance, Php	Bidding Date, Venue and time
1-SCFTPP (Regular/Lot)	5 lots of 1x65,000 +/-7%	264,846,400/Lot	Dec. 28, 2005 Pahiyas – 9:30 A.M.

Note: This cancels the previous invitation for the same supply of Sual CFTPP (Spot/Regular), Batch II, Sch. 1 published on November 4 & November 11, 2005.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the IRR-Part A of RA 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships. Organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (RA 5183). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased from BCSD upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P20,000.00 per mine source per schedule, either in cash or manager's check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. Pre-Bid Conference shall be on Dec. 15, 2005, 9:00 P.M. at Peñafrancia Function Room for Batch II, NPC, Diliman, Q.C.
6. Bidders are encouraged to submit Eligibility Documents on or before Dec. 16, 2005 for evaluation and issuance of Class A certification.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at designated venue on the bidding dates. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount stated in the Tender Document. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders. Any inquiry regarding the above invitation shall be addressed to the undersigned.
9. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Bids and Contracts Services Department (BCSD), NPC Building, Diliman, Quezon City at Tel. No. 922-1622 or visit NPC (www.napocor.gov.ph) and DBM (www.procurementservice.net.com) websites.

(Sgd.) SILVANO C. ZANORIA
Sr. Vice President and
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 6 & 13, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar St., Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee I (BAC I), invites to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project	NEW TAPPING, RECONNECTION & REPLACEMENT OF WATER METERS
Location	ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Brief Description	SUPPLY OF WATER METERS SIZES: 1/2"Ø, 3/4"Ø, 1"Ø & 2"Ø
Approved Budget for the Contract :	P 952,000.00
Delivery Period	30 CAL DAYS

Prospective Bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed prosecution for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examinations of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	November 29 to December 6, 2005
2. Prebid Conference	December 13, 2005
3. Submission of Letter of Intent and application	November 23, 2005
4. Opening of Bids	December 20, 2005
5. Bid Evaluation	December 23, 2005
6. Post-Qualification	December 27, 2005
7. Notice of Award	December 29, 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) to the Zamboanga City Water District Cashier.

The Zamboanga City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
BAC I CHAIRMAN

(PDI – December 6, 2005)

JOB Market every Sunday with INQUIRER

FOOD SECURITY STOCKS
Aside from stabilizing supply and prices of grains both at the farmgate and consumer levels, the National Food Authority is mandated to maintain a two-week supply of food security stocks at anytime in its warehouses. In addition to having sufficient stocks of cereals in times and places of calamity, both natural and man-made, it has to make sure that rice is made available in affected areas within 48 hours. The country needs an average of 580,000 cavans of rice daily.

ERRATUM

The Approving BAC Chairman in the Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid ad of **BICOL UNIVERSITY** published in the Classified Section of Philippine Daily Inquirer last December 4, 2005, was erroneously printed as Dr. Celia S. Vega instead of **Dr. OFELIA S. VEGA.**

Our apologies.

Mercedes Zobel McMicking

died in the grace of our Lord
on the 3rd day of December 2005 at the age of 98
in Sotogrande, Spain.

The Zobel de Ayala, Zobel, Roxas, and McMicking family members
request friends to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The funeral mass will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2005,
at 8:15 a.m. at Santuario de San Antonio Parish,
Forbes Park, Makati City.

The Board of Directors, Management, and Staff of
Ayala Corporation and the Ayala group of companies
deeply mourn the passing of

Mercedes Zobel McMicking

who passed away on the 3rd day of December 2005
at the age of 98 in Sotogrande, Spain.

Please join us in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Republic of the Philippines

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Region – IX Western Mindanao, Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 9911828, (062) 9850884, Fax No. (062) 9911339

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested Trucking/Hauling Operators, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the trucking/hauling of the 2006 NFA imported/local rice and/or palay at the following areas:

Province	Estimated Volume (In bags of 50 kgs.)	Approved Rate per Bag of 50 kgs.	Approved Budget
Zambo. City Port to NFA Whse.	880,000	4.50	3,960,000.00
Pagadian Port to Tiguma Whse.	105,000	6.00	630,000.00
Pagadian Port to Culo Whse.	45,000	20.00	900,000.00
Palid, Z.S. Port to Ipil ZS. Whse	60,000	6.00	360,000.00
Malangas Port to Guilawa Whse.	20,000	6.25	125,000.00
Pulauan Port to Gulayon Whse.	117,000	8.50	994,500.00
Lamao Wharf to Banigan Whse.	45,000	4.75	213,750.00
Gulayon Whse. to S. Osmeña Whse	17,000	16.50	280,500.00
Sta. Maria Wharf to Siocon Whse.	18,000	8.00	144,000.00
TOTAL	1,307,000		7,607,750.00

All trucking/hauling operators interested to participate in the bidding must be registered/accredited with NFA. Application forms for eligibility to bid, list of eligibility requirements and bid documents shall be issued upon submission of Letter of Intent to participate and payment of a nonrefundable fee Php 5,000.00 to the NFA in Zamboanga City on the scheduled date and time stated below.

Prospective bidders should have the experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use nondiscretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contraact shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Schedule if bidding activities:

> Last Day of Application for Registration/renewal of interested bidders who are not NFA accredited trucking/hauling operators or with expired registration	December 15, 2005 / 8:00AM-4:00PM
> Issuance of application forms for eligibility and list of eligibility requirements, submission of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Bid forms	December 8-9; 14-16, 2005
> Pre-Bid Conference*	December 21, 2005 / 2: 00 PM
> **Opening of Bids***	**January 6, 2006 / 2:00 PM**
> Bid Evaluation	January 7-11, 2006
> Post-Qualification	January 12-16, 2006
> Notice of Award	January 23, 2006

* Venue will be at the NFA Conference Room, Gov. Ramos Ave., San Roque, Zambo. City.

The National Food Authority assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **ROLANDO M. MARAVILLA**
OIC – Office of the ARM, and
Chairman, NFA-IX BAC

(PDI - Dec. 6 & 13, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Region - IX Western Mindanao, Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 9911828, (062) 9850884, Fax No. (062) 9911339

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested shipping companies/ship owners/operators who are registered/licensed with MARINA, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hiring of vessels for voyage charter in the dispersal of the 2006 NFA stocks from the Zamboanga City Port to other Provincial Ports of Region IX and the ARMM provinces, particulars as follows:

Destination/Port	Est. Volume (In bags of 50 kgs.)	Vessel Capacity	Approved Rate/Bag of 50 kgs.	Approved Budget
Pulauan Port, Dapitan City	117,000	10,000-30,000	21.00	2,457,000.00
Lamao Port, Liloy, ZDN	45,000	5,000-15,000	20.00	900,000.00
Sta. Maria Port, Siocon	18,000	5,000-10,000	16.00	288,000.00
Palid Port, Ipil Z. Sibugay	60,000	8,000-20,000	18.00	1,080,000.00
Malangas Port, Z. Sibugay	20,000	8,000-20,000	19.00	380,000.00
Pagadian Port, Zambo. Sur	150,000	10,000-30,000	20.00	3,000,000.00
Isabela Port, Basilan	160,000	5,000-30,000	12.00	1,920,000.00
Jolo Port, Sulu	30,000	8,000-20,000	18.00	540,000.00
Bongao Port, Tawi-Tawi	30,000	8,000-20,000	27.50	825,000.00
TOTAL				11,390,000.00

All shipping operators interested to participate in the bidding must be registered/accredited with NFA. Application forms for eligibility to bid, list of eligibility requirements and bid documents shall be issued upon submission of Letter of Intent to participate and payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00 to the NFA in Zamboanga City on the scheduled date and time stated below.

Prospective bidders should have the experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use nondiscretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR.).

Schedule of bidding activities:

Particulars	Date and Time
> Last Day of Application for Registration/renewal of interested bidders who are not NFA accredited shipping operators or with expired registration	December 16, 2005 / 8:00AM-4:00 PM
> Issuance of application forms for eligibility and list of eligibility requirements, submission of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Bid forms	December 8-9; 14-16, 2005
> Pre-Bid Conference*	December 22, 2005 / 2:00 P.M.
> **Opening of Bids***	**January 9, 2006 / 2:00 P.M.**
> Bid Evaluation	January 7-11, 2006
> Post-Qualification	January 12-16, 2006
> Notice of Award	January 23, 2006

* Venue will be at the NFA Conference Room, Gov. Ramos Ave., San Roque, Zambo. City.

The National Food Authority assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **ROLANDO M. MARAVILLA**
OIC-Office of the ARM, and
Chairman, NFA-IX BAC

(PDI--Dec. 6 & 13, 2005)

DOLE holds retooling seminar participated

HUNDREDS OF VOLuntary arbitrators (VAs) nationwide in the country's first "general retooling" initiative aimed at professional-izing the country's corps of voluntary arbitrators to ensure a stable and lasting industrial peace climate favorable to economic growth and jobs-friendly investments, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said.

Labor and Employment Secretary Patricia A. Sto. Tomas said the 1st General Retooling Seminar for Voluntary Arbitrators proceeds under the aegis of the DOLE's National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) and the Triparti te Voluntary Arbitration Advisory Council (TVAAC) in coordination with the Philippine Association on Voluntary Arbitration (PAVA) in Manila, Dec. 1 and 2, 2005.

Sto. Tomas will graced the seminar as its keynote speaker during the opening ceremonies on the theme, "Reinventing Voluntary Arbitration to make it a significant component of the Philippine ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution)."

Training on HACCP Plan Development set

THE FOOD DEVELOPment Center (FDC) of the National Food Authority (NFA) will conduct a seminar workshop on "Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan Development and Implementation" on Dec. 13-15, at the FDC Compound in Tagig City.

Dr. Manuel M. Garcia, a visiting consultant from Canada will be the principal lecturer during the training. Dr. Garcia was formerly a Senior Research Scientist of the Animal Diseases Research Institute, Agriculture Canada and is an internationally recognized microbiologist and food safety expert. The course fee is P6,700 per person, inclusive of training manual, lunches, snacks and a shuttle bus service from Ayala Center, Makati City to FDC and back. Interested parties are encouraged to make reservations. For further inquiries, please contact Ms. Amelia S. Bautista, Food Development Center, National Food Authority, FTI Complex, Tagig City at tel. nos. 838-4014; 838-4561; 838-4478 and fax nos. 838-4017 and 838-4692

Republic of the Philippines

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Region – IX Western Mindanao, Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062) 9911828, (062) 9850884, Fax No. (062) 9911339

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Food Authority, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites all interested Labor Services' Contractor, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the in-warehouse handling of the 2006 NFA imported/local rice and/or palay at the following areas:

Warehouse/Province	Estimated Volume (In bags of 50 kgs.)	Approved Rate per Bag of 50 kgs.	Approved Budget (In Pesos)
1. Zamboanga City Warehouses	3,580,000	1.70	6,086,000.00
2. Taway GID Whse, Ipil ZS	232,000	2.00	464,000.00
3. Guilawa Whse, Malangas ZS	148,000	2.00	296,000.00
4. Tiguma GID Whses, Pag. ZDS	410,000	1.75	717,500.00
5. Culo GID Whse, Molave, ZDS	90,000	1.75	157,500.00
6. Gulayon GID Whse, ZDN	452,000	2.00	904,000.00
7. FSC Whse, S. Osmeña, ZDN	34,000	2.00	68,000.00
8. Lituban Whse, Siocon ZDN	36,000	2.00	72,000.00
9. Banigan Whse., Liloy, ZDN	90,000	2.00	180,000.00
TOTAL	**5,072,000**		**8,945,000.00**

All labor contractors interested to participate in the bidding must be registered/accredited with NFA. Application forms for eligibility to bid, list of eligibility requirements and bid documents shall be issued upon submission of Letter of Intent to participate and payment of a nonrefundable fee of Php 3,500.00 to the NFA in Zamboanga City on the scheduled date and time stated below.

Prospective bidders should have the experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use nondiscretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Schedule of bidding activities:

Particulars	Date and Time
• Last Day of Application for Registration/renewal of interested bidders who are not NFA accredited cargo handling operators or / with expired registration	December 14, 2005/8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
• Issuance of application forms for eligibility and list of eligibility requirements, submission of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Bid forms	December 8-9; 14-16, 2005
• Pre-Bid Conference*	December 20, 2005 / 2:00 P.M.
• Opening of Bids*	**January 5, 2006 / 2:00 P.M.**
• Bid Evaluation	January 6-10, 2006
• Post-Qualification	January 11-15, 2006
• Notice of Award	January 20, 2006

* Venue will be at the NFA Conference Room, Gov. Ramos Ave., San Roque, Zambo, City.

The National Food Authority assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **ROLANDO M. MARAVILLA**
OIC-Office of the ARM, and
Chairman, NFA-IX BAC

(PDI – December 6 & 13, 2005)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-333	1 lot Supply and Delivery of the following: • 50 Metaframe Presentation Server, Enterprise Edition for Windows-x-1 Concurrent User Connection Pack with Subscription Advantage • 1 Metaframe Presentation Server 4.0 for Windows-English Mediakit • 1 CITRIX Standard Support Agreement - APAC	P 2,265,000.00	LBP Funds
2005-343	4 lots Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Various Alarm Devices at various branches of LANDBANK	17,582,000.00	LBP Funds

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bidding for the above requirements are scheduled on December 21, 2005 at 1:00 PM and pertinent Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 and P2,000.00 for ITB Nos. 2005-333 and 2005-343, respectively.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **December 8, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to **Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).**

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI- Nov. 29 & Dec. 6, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines

ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT

Pilar St., Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee I (BAC I), invites to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

Name of Project	NEW TAPPING AND REHABILITATION PROJECT UNDER TAKEN BY CMD
Location	ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Brief Description	LOT 1. SUPPLY OF BRASS AND CI FITTINGS; LOT 2: SUPPLY OF PVC FITTINGS
Approved Budget for the Contract	LOT 1: P 522,320.00, LOT 2: P 214,882.00
Delivery Period	60 CAL DAYS FOR BOTH LOT 1 & 2

Prospective Bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examinations of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows.

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	November 29 to December 8, 2005
2. Prebid Conference	December 13, 2005
3. Opening of Bids	December 20, 2005
4. Bid Evaluation	December 23, 2005
5. Post-Qualification	December 27, 2005
6. Notice of Award	December 29, 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Hundred Pesos per Lot (P500.00/lot) to the Zamboanga City Water District Cashier.

The Zamboanga City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
BAC I CHAIRMAN

(PDI – December 6, 2005)

Send your resumé instantly.

JOB Market
www.jobmarketonline.com

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

ERRATUM
to the
Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Proposed NFA Central Office Renovation Works

In connection with the Invitation to apply for eligibility and to bid published last Saturday, December 3, 2005, please be guided on the following corrections:

1. First paragraph should read as follows:
   The National Food Authority through its COF for 2005 intends to apply the sum of PESOS: NINETEEN MILLION THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY THOUSAND SEVEN PESOS AND 40/100 ONLY (P19,307,007.40) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Renovation of the Proposed NFA Central Office at PHILSUGIN Bldg., Philippine Sugar Center, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The Relevant Experience of Bidder appearing in the lower portion of the publication marked as No. 1 should read as follows:

"Interested bidders must have relevant experience in general finishing works such as painting, ceiling, tile, electrical works and provision of air-conditioning units."

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI – December 6, 2005)

NFA's food security role, a boon to political and economic stability

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY'S role as stabilizer of rice price and supply contributes to the country's economic stability and peace and order as majority of the people are assured of the continuous availability of good quality yet affordable rice in the market.

NFA administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. said the agency's rice sales have continuously been on the uptrend, proof that more and more consumers are relying on the government's program of rice distribution for their daily needs. Actual monthly rice sales for the year averaged at 122 percent over the NFA's distribution target. Rice sales, Tan said, are higher from July to September and before the onset of harvest when both commercial and household rice stocks dip. NFA rice which remains the cheapest in the market at P18 per kg is available in the agency's Tindahan ni Gloria Rolling Stores, Tindahan ni Gloria sa Palengke and other accredited rice retail outlets.

For more information regarding the agency's rice sales, the public may send their inquiries, complaints via Text NFA program through mobile number 0917-6210927.

LAUNCH OF NATIONWIDE HOUSING PROGRAM

Vice President Noli 'Kabayan' De Castro, Chairman, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), listens to House Speaker Jose De Venecia, during the MOA signing ceremony Tuesday aimed at launching a nationwide housing program that will benefit some 200,000 homeless families. The program is a collaborative undertaking among the national and local government agencies namely, the HUDCC, the House of Representatives, the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, the League of Provinces of the Philippines, and the Leagues of Cities and Municipalities. To date, the government shelter sector has provided shelter and tenurial security to nearly 900,000 families.

Dental home initiative to prevent childhood caries

IN A POLICY STATEMENT ISSUED IN 2003, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) section on Pediatric Dentistry recommended the establishment of a dental home to help prevent early childhood caries (ECC).

Considered as one of the most common chronic infections in children, ECC indicates the presence of one or more decayed, missing, or filled tooth surface in the primary tooth of children. In the Philippines, local data showed that ECC is very common among Filipino children. By the time they reach six years of age, 92 percent of these children have ECC. Thus, making the country second highest in the Western Pacific Region, according to the Department of Health.

Among the recommendations to parents by the AAP section on Pediatric Dentistry in establishing a dental home include the following: avoid carbonated beverages before 2 ½ years of age; brush twice daily and use of dental floss in older children; avoid shared utensils and lip-kissing; early referral to the dentist for caries treatment, and; minimize prolonged bottle feeding particularly at night.

For babies six months to three years old, fluoride supplement using topical/systemic fluoride is advised; while fluoride-containing toothpaste together with the use of an alcohol-free mouth rinse at bed time is recommended for older children.

Another approach is the use of xylitol, a 5-carbon polyol, which has been shown to inhibit the growth of the cariogenic bacterium, S. mutans. It is non-fermentable and cannot be converted to acids by oral bacteria. Xylitol creates an alkaline environment that is unreceptive to all the destructive bacteria, particularly to S. mutans, and inhibits plaque formation. Unlike sugar, which is a risk factor for dental caries, xylitol has energy value, but is found to have either low or no caries-promoting properties.

Following these recommendations, Pediapharma Inc (PPI) - a market leader in innovative pediatric pharmaceutical and consumer products - fluoride and xylitol-based products can be used for this dental home initiative to prevent early childhood caries. For infants six months to three years old, Infaflor drops containing 0.5 mg (500 mcg) fluoride can be used for fluoride supplementation and Xylogel which contains 5 percent xylitol that can be applied three to four times daily especially at bedtime to inhibit the growth of the cariogenic S. mutans. Distilled bottled water can be fluoridated by adding 1 mL. (0.5 mg fluoride) of Infaflor drops to one liter of water to make 0.5 ppm to prevent dental caries.

For older children, Xyloclens which contains 2.5 percent xylitol and fluoride can be used as a toothpaste and Xylorinse, an alcohol-free xylitol mouth wash for nighttime mouth rinse. For mothers, yayas or caregivers, Xylorinse mouthwash can be used regularly to reduce transmission of S. mutans. Pediapharma's Xylogel, Xylorinse and Xyloclens are recent recipients of product excellence awards conferred by the Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards and National Product Quality Excellence Awards.

Formulated by PPI president/CEO Dr. Arturo C. Ludan, these innovative oral/dental health products are BFAD aaproved and Halal-certified, which means they underwent strict scrutiny to ensure that they are pure, safe and quality-assured and are therefore allowed under the Islamic law.

In his recent lecture to the dentists of the Iloilo Chapter of the Philippine Dental Association, Dr. Ludan talked on establishing a dental home initiative which was well-received. The scientific activity was sponsored by Medicus Inc (Iloilo).

PRULIFE UK RELOCATES ITS CUSTOMER SERVICE OPERATIONS

PRULife UK, which has seen its Philippine business grow dramatically in the past few months, will soon relocate its customer servicing and backroom facilities. The units' new address is the SSHG Law Center on Paseo Roxas, Makati City. The building, partly owned by the Land Bank, was chosen for its excellent amenities and accessibility to the general public. The relocation, facilitated by the Pronove & Associates, a real estate service provider, was finalized at a contract signing recently, with the following in attendance (from left): lawyer Kriden Baldomera, legal officer-SLT of Land Bank; Maritess Gaerlan, head-SPAD of Land Bank; Monique Pronove, country managing director of Pronove Tai & Associates, Omar Salvo, first VP-ARG of Land Bank; Gary B. Teves, until recently president of Land Bank; Bobby Madrid, president of PRULife UK; Indren Naidoo, SVP & CFO of PRULife UK; George Opeda, SVP and COO of PRULife UK; and lawyer Gani Cruz, legal officer of PRULife UK.

ASIATRUST BANK AT 45

Asiatrust Bank recently celebrated its 45th Anniversary with a series of activities thanking their loyal patrons who have been with them all throughout these years. Asiatrust Bank is a strong advocate of Small and Medium Enterprises and has been a dedicated partner in lending a helping hand to SMEs in need of financial support. With its continuing thrust to facilitate the growth and development of SMEs, Asiatrust Bank will be an invaluable partner towards Philippine growth. Shown are (from left): Frederick Evan Chua, main office branch manager; Mai Aguiting, cluster head; Baby Bañares, retail banking sector head; (rightmost) Dionisio Ong, Asiatrust Bank president and CEO; with valued clients who were among the recipients of the loyalty awards presented during the affair.

RED LIONS LAUNCH HOMECOMING PROJECTS

The various 2006 Jubilarian Batches have started to plan various activities for the San Beda College Grand Alumni Homecoming, which will culminate with the Homecoming Night on Feb. 18, at the Mendiola Quadrangle. The Homecoming Theme is - stayin_alive@onehundredandfive - marking San Beda's 105th Anniversary by 2006. To kick-off the festivities, an All-Bedan Inter-Batch Christmas Party will be held on Thursday, Dec. 8, at My Brother's Mustache, Scout Tuason cor Scout Madrinan, QC, starting at 6 p.m., where all Bedan Alumni of all batches, of all levels (Grade School, High School and College), and of all schools (Mendiola and Alabang), will come together for a long night of fellowship and fun. Photo shows some of the members of the Homecoming Core Group (from left): Gabby Patag (HS '86), Pidoy Velez (HS '76), Ramci Sanvictores (HS '76), Dr. Conrad Oca (president of the HS '81 Silver Jubilarian Batch), Dr. Jimmy Galvez Tan (HS '66 and president of the San Beda College Alumni Foundation), Art Nuguid (HS '71), Bu Castro (HS '70), Caloy Barcelo (HS '56), Rene Ocampo (HS '70), Peewee Leynes (HS '66) and Gus Lagman (foreground, president of the HS '56 Golden Jubilarian Batch). Bedan Brotherhood will never cease!

URC LAUNCHES ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES IN BAKING

Universal Robina Corp (URC), through its Flour division, recently launched its first recipe baking book at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila. Dubbed 'Endless Possibilities in Baking', this kitchen counter must-have features a delectable collection of recipes of cakes, pastries and breads concocted by baking wizard, chef Dennis Hipolito. Portion of the proceeds from sales of the must-have recipe book will be donated to Cardinal Sin Village for the benefit of its bakery which provide livelihood for their residents . For book purchases and inquiries, call URC Flour Division Manila at 672-1575 or 672-1578 to 80 local 109, 118, 216; or the Davao office at (63-82) 235-2013 or (63-2) 235-2490. Photo shows 'Endless Possibilities in Baking' author chef Dennis Hipolito flanked by Lance Gokongwei, URC president and CEO and Ellison Lee, URC Flour VP and business unit GM.

SAN MIGUEL BAGS MARKETING PLUM

San Miguel Corp was recently named Most Outstanding Food and Beverage Company of the Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards (PMEA). It cited San Miguel's continuous effort in satisfying consumers' everyday needs with its wide array of products and services in conferring the award. Felix M. Lao (left), Philippine Marketing Excellence Awards Committee chair gives the award to Bert P. Pasquin, assistant vice-president for internal communication of San Miguel's Corporate Affairs Office in the presence of Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. (center) who was the event's special guest of honor.

Microdata marks 25 years of excellence

"STERLING QUALITY - THAT'S what Microdata Systems & Management Inc has attained, with God's help and many friends, as we celebrate our Silver Anniversary this year," announces Microdata president and CEO Mariano Ang Jr with mixed pride and gratitude. Microdata is celebrating 25 years of excellent service as one of the country's leading professional sales-and-service providers in the audio-visual industry. This excellence is attributed not only to the high standard of the people behind and at the forefront of their company's operations, but most especially to the high technology of the products Microdata is authorized to exclusively distribute in the Philippines. Such prestigious brands are: Sanyo and Avio (multi media projectors), Konica Minolta OTG (Document Imaging and Imaging Software), Tandberg (Video Conference Systems), Sanako (Digital Language Laboratory & Computer-Based Learning Solutions), Polyvisions (Interactive whiteboards & Room Scheduling Systems), DIS (Conference Discussion Systems) and Grandview (Projecting Screens).

ProductFILES

Titaniariffic way to Happy Feet

TITANIA
a Titania-rrific way to Happy Feet!

WITH CHRISTMAS JUST AROUND the corner and with all the shopping, travelling, and socializing that we bring our feet into, there's a better way to pamper them this season and that's by giving them the gift of Happy Feet and Titania. With the Titaniariffic way to Happy Feet, we can also give our feet that festive spirit. Wear feet-friendly Happy Feet sandals to provide your feet the support it needs while out enjoying the holiday season. At home, pamper your feet even more with Titania Foot Care products now available in sachets. To celebrate the holiday season, every P300 purchase (single receipt) of a pair of Happy Feet sandals comes with 2 free Titania sachets. Hurry and give your feet the treatment they deserve. Available at selected SM outlets.

Complete holiday recipes in a box

INTRODUCING THE RECIPE REGALO Packs from Knorr Royal Pasta and Best Foods Mayo Magic. The collectible box contains wonderful macaroni salad recipes kitchen-tested at the Unilever Foods kitchens. What's more, all the ingredients needed to prepare the salad is already in the box - Alaska Crème, Dole Pineapple and Century Tuna - at discounted prices. Perfect for serving to your family or for gifts to your neighbors and friends so they can share the holiday spirit with their own loved ones. The Recipe Regalo Packs are available at most major supermarkets for a limited time only.

BITS Clips

Redemptorist Juvenate Antipolo homecoming

ALL ALUMNI OF THE REDEMPTORIST JUVENATE in Antipolo are invited to three days of fun, reminiscing and "re-Juvenation" as the seminary holds its grand homecoming and reunion on Feb. 17 to 19, at the Redemptorist Retreat House in Lipa City, Batangas. Be there and renew old ties and friendships with our brothers in faith. For details, call Ted Mendoza at 633-3683 or text at 0918-9119062, e-mail at tjm1855@yahoo.com. You may also e-mail Resti Reyes at restireyes@yahoo.com.

Banco De Oro's Rewards Program Raffle

BANKING HAS NEVER BEEN AS REWARDING WITH BANCO DE ORO'S REWARDS Program Raffle. A lucky member takes home a 1 year supply of SM gift certificates worth P20,000 per month, which means shopping galore from January to December 2006. This promo is automatically open to all existing and new individual members of the BDO Rewards Program with active and/or current accounts. In order to qualify, the minimum required balances should be met. Every one (1) outstanding BDO point earned on the BDO Rewards Card entitles you to one (1) raffle entry. Raffle entries will be electronically generated on the outstanding total points earned from the time of membership up to Jan. 31. The BDO Rewards Card Number shall be the identifier of the member and shall be used as entry number for the raffle promotion. Members may check their available raffle entries through the BDO Call Center at 631-8000, Domestic Toll Free # 1-800-10-631-8000 or by visiting any BDO branch. Promo runs until Dec. 31. All active members as of Dec. 31 will continue to earn raffle entries up to Jan. 31. Grand raffle draw will be on Feb. 10. To know more about BDO Rewards, please call BDO Call Center at 631-8000 or Domestic/Provincial Toll Free number 1-800-10-6318000 or visit your nearest BDO branch and sign up now.

The Body Shop: Cranberry for Christmas

THE LIMITED EDITION CRANBERRY RANGE MAKES A COMEBACK TO THE Body Shop this festive season in 7 excitingly new products. It offers a complete range of bath and body products, from a Cranberry vegetable-based shimmer Soap that thoroughly cleanses the skin, to a Cranberry cleansing Shower Gel that lathers and leaves the skin subtly scented, all the way to the worldwide best selling intensive rich and creamy moisturizer original to The Body Shop called Cranberry Body Butter. The Cranberry Shimmer Body Lotion comes back with a sweet-scented vengeance to satisfy this season's expectations. The limited edition range also include other all-year-round favorites like the gently exfoliating Cranberry Body Scrub, the moisturizing Cranberry Shimmer Lip Balm and the all-purpose Cranberry Home Fragrance Oil. The Limited Edition Cranberry Range is available at The Body Shop branches located in Glorietta 2, Powerplant, Greenbelt 4, The Podium, Market-Market, Alabang Town Center, SM Malls, Robinson Malls and Duty Free Philippines.

SUN LIFE FINANCIAL STICKER PROMO WINNER

P25,000
HONG KONG!

When Michael Angelo Patrick Asperin slowed down at Petron Connecticut to gas up his Mercedez Benz that Friday night, little did he know that his next stop would be 630 miles away in Hong Kong. Asperin bagged the grand prize in the Spot-a-Key-to-Life sticker promo, winning an all-expense paid trip for two to Disneyland's newest home in Asia. It will be recalled that Sun Life Financial ran a series of stickering events from July to October to boost awareness of its logo and tagline - 'Because Trust is earned'. A sticker instantly entitled the motorist to free P25,000 worth in Personal Accident (PA) insurance. Highlighting the promo was the spot-the-sticker campaign on Oct.7 when free passes to Hong Kong, Boracay, Baguio, Tagaytay, and Enchanted Kingdom were given away. Photo shows Spot-a-Key-to-Life grand prize winner Michael Angelo Patrick Asperin (left) and son receiving his Free Trip to Hong Kong package from Sun Life Financial senior corporate communications specialist Don Aaron Peji.

WPI, ADMU ALUMNI PARTNER WITH GK

Wyeth Philippines Inc (WPI) and Ateneo de Manila University alumni partnered with Gawad Kalinga (GK) in constructing a total of 42 houses in Bagong Silang, Caloocan. WPI president Perpetuo 'Boy' de Claro poured cement for the cornerstone of the first house to be built on the twelfth GK site in Bagong Silang. Aside from the GK project, Wyeth has also helped hundreds of tuberculosis patients get treatment through its anti-TB campaign in Bagong Silang.

STARSTRUCK BY BUM EQUIPMENT'S NEW G

Since it first hit the fashion world, BUM Equipment has been a style staple especially among the young talented celebrities from the entertainment industry. Known for its ultra comfortable denim bottoms and colorful tops, BUM Equipment has been introducing to the fashion fore a pool of matinee idols who have become image models for the brand. Today, we meet the newest edition to the string of beautiful faces and promising talents that have embodied the brand since it spearheaded its earlier campaigns. Just like like her predecessors. this young gal believes in staying in style without sacrificing comfort and practicality. BUM Equipment's new G, the newest and hottest girl about town, Starstruck Survivor Batch 2 - LJ Reyes.

COKE BAR PAINTS MANILA RED

The Coke Bar is a 20-foot high, Coke bottle-shaped, music bar with built in vending machines at the heart of Manila Baywalk. This also happens to be the country's first 3-dimensional billboard. During the formal unveiling, Coke dedicated the Coke Bar to Manila as support for the Mayor's Buhayin ang Maynila campaign. Part of the proceeds of the Coke Bar will help fund Manila flagship projects like Manila Zoo development plan and maintenance of Manila Baywalk.

Gov't to raise ₱2.3B from privatization in '06

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO GENERATE next year over P2.3 billion in revenues from the privatization of state assets to boost spending for infrastructure and basic services.

Finance Undersecretary Gabriel Singson Jr., who is in charge of government's privatization efforts, told reporters that assets that were sure to be put on the auction block next year include Channels 9 and 13, Philippine Postal Corp., PNOC-Energy Development Corp., and the government's right to 84 percent of the shares in Maynilad Water Services Inc.

"If all of these are sold, then the amount (of revenues to be generated) would exceed the P2.3 billion that was achieved this year," Singson said on the sidelines of the 2005 World Congress of Financial Executives held yesterday in Makati City.

This year, the government raised about P8.3 billion from privatization, the bulk of which came from the sale of its stake in Philippine National Bank to the Lucio Tan group. But of the amount, only P2.3 billion was remitted to the national government because part of the proceeds was used to pay off PNB's debts to the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

Although the values of the state assets to be privatized next year would exceed P2.3 billion, Singson said the government only assumed P500 million in its budget for 2006.

He explained that the budget program should be conservative because revenues from privatization "do not only depend on the preparedness of the state assets but also on the interest among private sector investors."

Singson said the government would sell its right to 84-percent of Maynilad's shares through an auction in the second quarter of next year, most likely in April.

On Channels 9 and 13, Singson said the government was searching for a financial advisor that would guide privatization officials in the valuation of the television stations.

The government likewise has plans to sell its shares in San Miguel Corp. and Manila Electric Co. (Meralco).

The government has more than a 20-percent share in Meralco.

Step up drive vs smugglers, gov't urged

By Ronnel W.Domingo

CONSUMER GROUP CONSUMER AND OIL Price Watch yesterday called for a more vigorous campaign against tax evaders, saying this was needed to follow through on the initial success of implementing the reformed value-added tax.

COPW chair Raul T. Concepcion said his group was working "doubly hard" with the Department of Finance to ensure that the momentum in going after tax cheats was sustained.

"(All concerned need to do this), now that the VAT is in place," Concepcion said in press briefing.

Concepcion expressed concern, however, over the resignation of Finance Undersecretary Emanuel P. Bonoan "because he was the driving force in the campaign against tax evasion."

Concepcion said COPW had been working closely with the DOF when Jose Isidro Camacho and Cesar Purisima headed the department.

"(COPW and the DOF cooperated) to erase the image that the agencies under them were the most corrupt in the past 50 years," he said.

Concepcion said that back then, the Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) and Run After The Smugglers (RATS) programs were vigorously pursued.

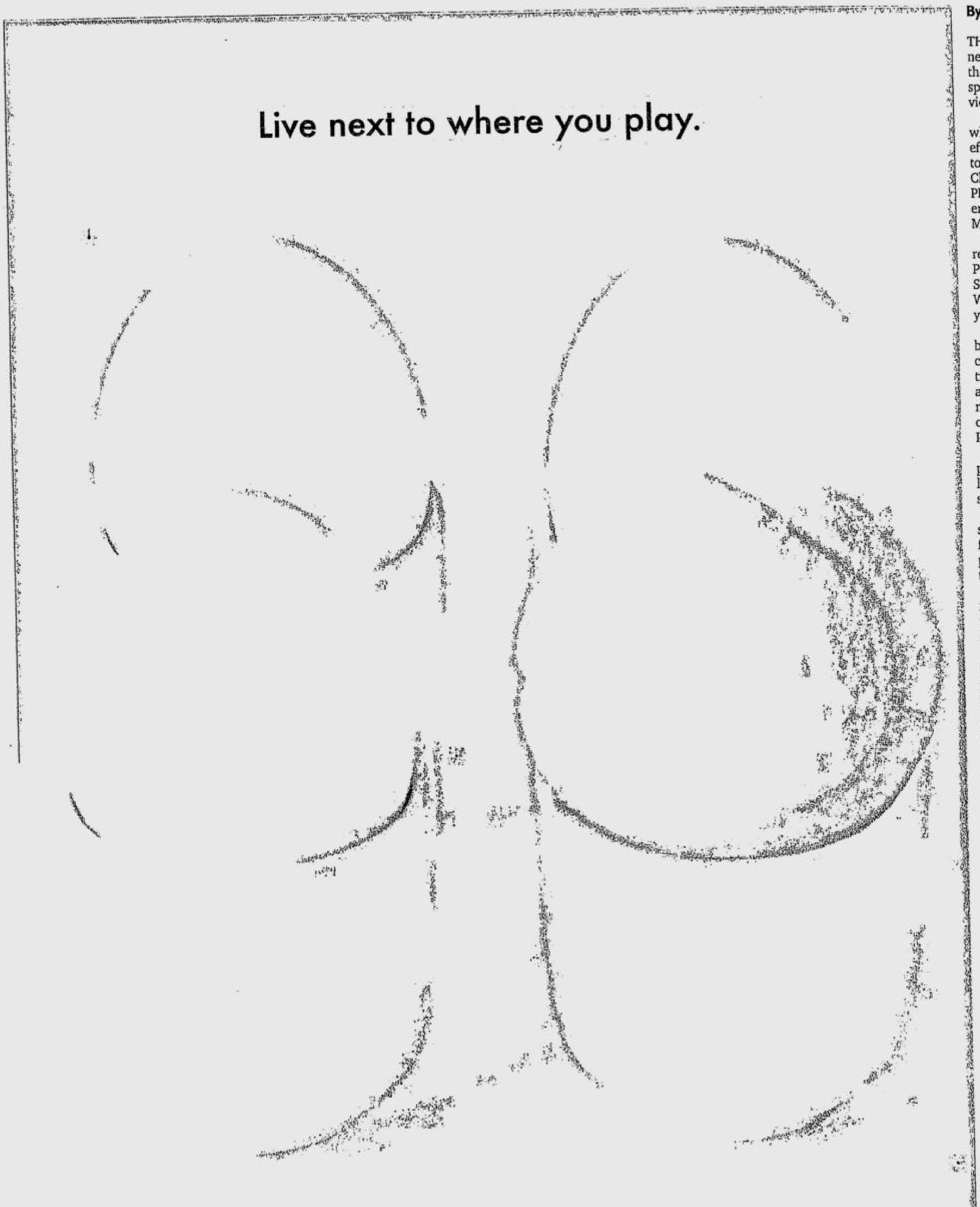
"Bonoan's resignation is a setback but we now ask the business community to help the DOF in ferreting out tax delinquents and content with the proliferation of smuggled and undervalued goods," he said.

The COPW chief said firms must actively contribute to such efforts, join industry associations and be vigilant, especially against smuggling.

"We grant that there have been 'ongoing' campaigns against tax evasion and smuggling in the private sector, but we need more action and less words," Concepcion said.

He cited as an example the local oil industry, which he said could fight smuggling with relative ease since there were only about eight vessels authorized to bring in petroleum products.

Still, COPW had advocated for possible amendments to the new VAT law saying it was "far from ideal."



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Weight-gaining behaviors

WELL AND GOOD
Tina Juan

YOU EITHER LOVE him or hate him. Few people feel neutral about Dr. Phil McGraw, the outspoken psychologist who was a favorite guest for several years on The Oprah Winfrey Show.

Oprah obviously believed in him because she eventually negotiated for him to have his own show.

Dr. Phil, as he is commonly called, is known for brutally frank psychological advice on family, love and other relationship issues. He dishes out the same style of weight loss advice in his best-seller, "The Ultimate Weight Solution: The 7 Keys to Weight Loss Freedom."

He starts the book with the quote, "Change can come in either of two important ways: Start behaving positively or stop behaving negatively."

Dr. Phil enumerates some of the behaviors that can negatively affect your weight like eating too fast, habitually eating leftovers or dessert, always cleaning your plate even when you are feeling full, and eating sweet, high-fat food as a matter of habit.

There is nothing new in his observation. Many other authors of weight-loss books have pointed out the same things. The difference with Dr. Phil is he calls a spade a spade and estimates how much weight you can gain from these "weight-gaining behaviors."

He bases his computations on accepted calorie counts for common food and scientific studies of caloric cost of specific eating behavior. He cautions that results may vary from person to person. Annual weight gain is calculated on the assumption that one pound of fat is equivalent to 3,500 calories.

The list drives home the point that your eating behaviors are directly related to your weight gain or loss.

- Eating second servings (200 calories per helping) three times a week = 600 extra calories a week = 9 lb in one year
- Habitual overeating, every day, 380 calories a day = 2,660 extra calories a week = 40 lb
- Eating a super-size bagel (4½-in diameter, 323 calories) three times a week, rather than having a small bagel (3-in diameter, 156 calories) = 500 extra calories a week = 8 lb
- Eating Big Macs (or equivalent, 570 calories) twice a week, rather than choosing a small-size hamburger (260 calories) = 620 extra calories a week = 9 lb
- Eating one glazed doughnut (290 calories) every day at work during your coffee break = 1,450 extra calories a week = 21 lb
- Drinking a cup of whole milk (150 calories) twice a day, rather than having skim milk (86 calories) = 896 extra calories a week = 13 lb
- Drinking one regular soda a day (144 calories) rather than having a calorie-free soda = 1,008 extra calories a week = 15 lb
- Snacking on 15 to 20 potato chips a day (150 calories) = 1,050 extra calories a week = 16 lb
- Eating a bowl of regular ice cream (280 calories) five times a week, rather than having a bowl of nonfat frozen yogurt (160 calories) = 600 extra calories a week = 9 lb
- Bingeing twice a week (1,000 to 3,000 calories per episode) = 2,000 to 6,000 extra calories a week = 30 to 90 lb
- Eating out at fast-food restaurants five times a week compared to having a healthy meal prepared at home (56 extra calories per fast-food meal) = 280 extra calories a week = 4 lb
- Snacking while watching television, five hours a week (136 extra calories per snack) = 680 extra calories a week = 10 lb
- Nighttime eating (eating after dinner), five episodes a week (270 calories per episode) = 1,350 extra calories a week = 20 lb
- Drinking three beers at Happy Hour once a week (146 calories per beer) = 438 extra calories a week = 6½ lb

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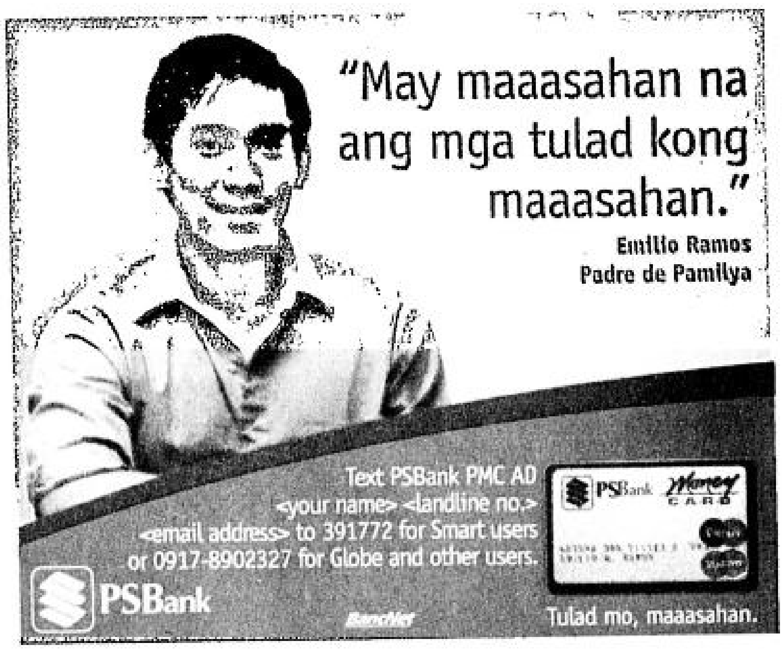

"May maaasahan na ang mga tulad kong maaasahan."
Emilio Ramos
Padre de Pamilya
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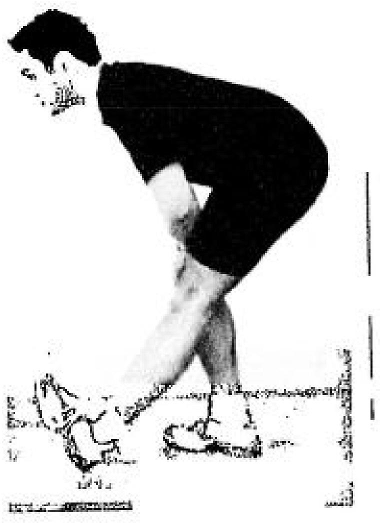
PSBank
Tulad mo, maaasahan.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Standing hamstring stretch

STRETCHES THE HAMstrings or back of the thighs



Equipment

None

Exercise technique

1. Stand with your left leg in front. Keep your foot flexed.
2. Lower your upper body toward your leg.
3. Place your hands on your thighs to support your body weight.
4. Hold the stretch for the desired length of time.
5. Switch to the other leg.

Performance tips

1. To increase the stretch, pretend that your buttocks are against a wall. Slide your buttocks up the wall slightly.
2. Keep your spine straight instead of rounded. Keep your chest open instead of concave.
3. Sit back on your buttocks instead of bending forward from the waist.

Repetitions

Hold for 10 to 30 seconds. Do once or twice.

The 5 Ds to wellness

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

EVERY EFFORT HAS ITS REward, just as every dream has its fulfillment.

But how does one realize his/her goals? In the world of wellness, there are five key words and they all begin with the letter D. Adopting a wellness lifestyle is made easier with this, my personal guide.

1. Desire

The first D is the most crucial. It is the beginning of all possible creation. And its cradle is the heart. From the heart is born desire—that feeling that, when translated into words, says "I want this for myself." "I desire it."

Without desire nothing else can follow. In a real-life situation, a health goal may be: "I desire to be healthier, trimmer and happier." So what good is desire if it remains just a feeling of wanting?

All too often, we get stuck in this phase. All feeling, no action. Desire is a commitment of the heart. When your heart is connected, desire must be transcended.

While desire is the inspiration that fills the heart, it cannot function without its major partner, the second D.

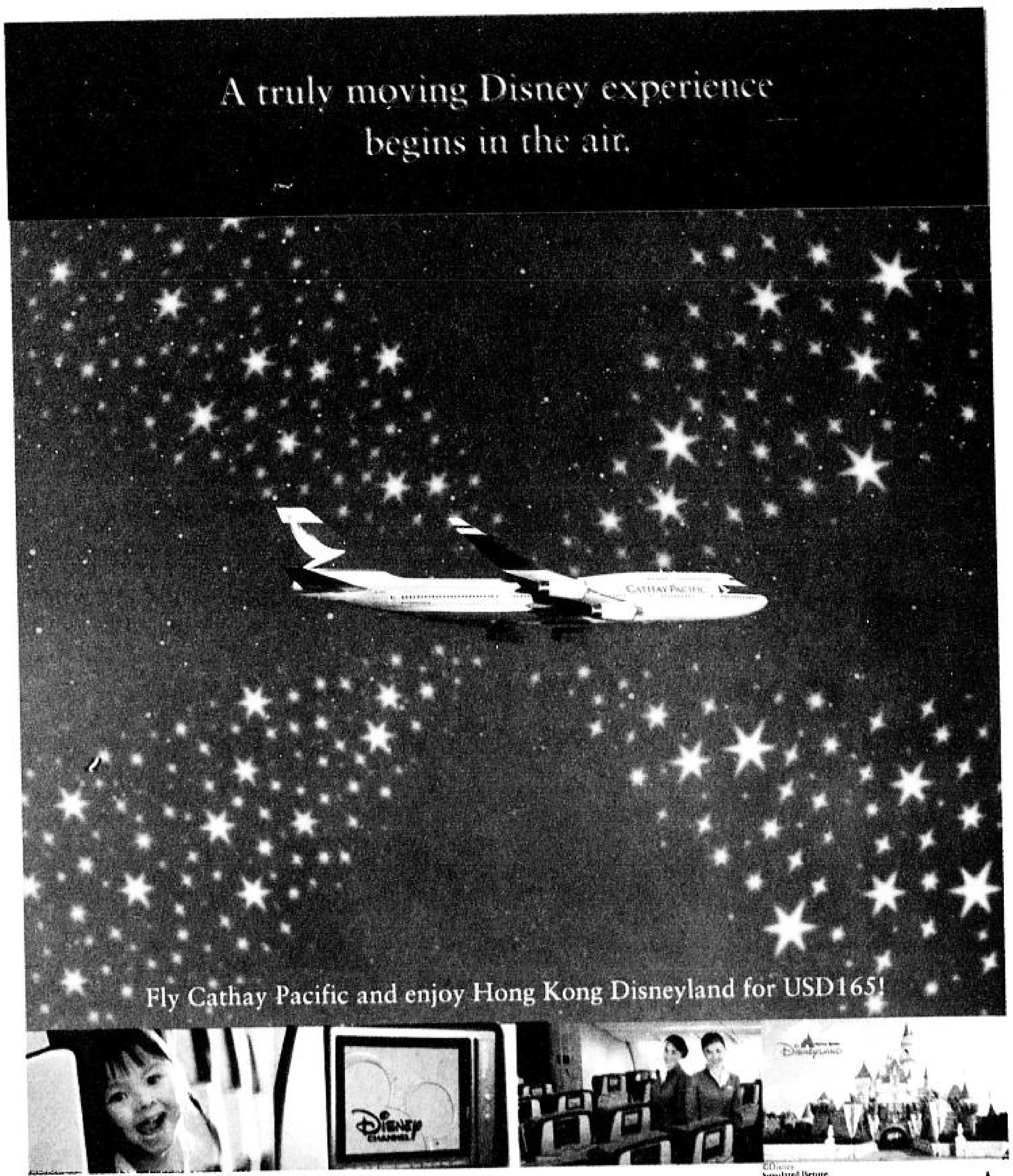
2. Determination

The commitment of your mind is the next step to reaching your desired goal. Note: Desire now becomes a goal. When the heart says "I want," the mind says "I will." The marriage of heart and mind will ensure the success of any endeavor.

So you want what you want, right? Your determination makes it so. Thus, the translation: "I don't just want to be healthier, trimmer and happier. I will become those things." Want turns into will. This second D will chart the course from the landscape of emotion to the arena of action.

So now you explore all possible choices to reach your goal such as

THE 5/ C3



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MADAM Mina Sinco B and husband Dol Bhasavanich; Thai Ambassador Asha Dvitiyananda; Bob Zozobrado; Cheche Lazaro; and Arjun Shroff

MARC Torroba, Alex Cabunag, Oman Santiago, Khun Bongkojkerd, and Andre Lasquety

JETSETTERS: Maucie Cuna, Sally Lee, Mark Trias, Lourdes Banzon, Mike Dato, and Minerva de Ocampo

A smooth-as-silk bash

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THAT AIRLINE THAT FLIES AS "SMOOTH as silk," Thai International Airways, gave a huge bash to celebrate its "comprehensive re-branding."

The cocktail-reception at the Dusit Hotel in Makati was attended by a capacity crowd of hotshot government officials, business leaders, travel trade representatives, clients, and other Thai pals, *palanggas*.

Khun Dol Bhasavanich, the Philippines' and Guam's popular general manager, and other top Thai executives greeted us at the gorgeously decorated grand Dusit Ballroom. Waiters served finger food and the buffet tables were filled with excellently prepared Thai-inspired delicacies from Dusit's mega chef. Sales manager **Emily Martinez** and her rah-rah team made sure every invitee got the warm Thai hospitality the airline was known for.

A modernized Thai ethnic dance was performed as the new, colorful, eye-catching logo was projected on the screen.

Now Thai can fly you nonstop to interesting Moscow, its newest destination, from Bangkok three times a week.

Thai also flies nonstop to New York, the fastest direct flight from Bangkok to the Big Apple, in the long-range Airbus A340-500, no less, dahlings.

Lucky gal of the night, *palanggas*, was **Joan Gomez**, who was ecstatic when she won a Manila-New York-Manila ticket.

GM Dol Bhasavanich, in his short speech, assured the invitees "that the airline will continue to provide better options for fastidious travelers. One thing however remains steadfast—Thai is still the airline that flies . . . smooth as silk!" The excited, partying guests applauded enthusiastically, *palanggas*.

Most seven

Faster than you could bat an eyelash, *palanggas*, Mild 7's popular "Most Seven" happening was held at Il Ponticello Café Ristorante on Valero Street, Makati.

With white drapes for backdrop, perfect lighting and great music, the resto set a real cool mood for Manille's party hoppers. Main feature of the event was the photo gallery, which the invitees viewed as they sipped wine from **Rene Barbier**, dahlings.

This Most Successful Seven bash, with Mild Seven as presenter, honored seven of Manille's hot young entrepreneurs—**Amina Aranaz** for Aranaz Bags, **Anne Arcenas Gonzales** for Havaianas, **Chi Chi Atienza** for Nullah, **Derrick Chiongbian** for Holy Kettle Corn, and **Tina Trillana Lagdameo** for Go Nuts Donuts.

As a way of saluting "seven individuals who have made a mark in their respective fields," a special photographic exhibit by ace photographer **Raymund Isaac** was unveiled. Young, rah-rah PR man G.P. Reyes, *palanggas*, added that makeup was by Shu Uemura and murals were by Epson.

The latest event, called Most Stunning Seven Party, was held at Fiamma on Jupiter, a new hip and happening bar from the creators of Pravda and Ponti, no less.

For more info, call GP Reyes at 0917-8534747 or 9106779. You're in for a cool, fun night, *palanggas*.

Fashion and opera

It has to be my *palangga*, world-class prince of Alta Moda **Inno Sotto**, no less, who would end the year with a super bang. He shares twin billing with the Metropolitan New York Opera for a fab show called "Beloved" on, take note dahlings, Dec. 9 at the Makati Shangri-La's grand ballroom.

Beneficiaries are the Virlanie Foundation and the Rotary Gift of Life Inc., two super charitable organizations reaching out to less fortunate children. You can be sure, *palanggas*, that Cosmo Manille's chic society set will be in complete attendance not only to witness this major happening, but to support this dinner-gala that aims to raise funds for a worthy cause.

The evening will begin with opera featuring five renowned artists especially flown in for the event—baritone **Ryan Taylor**; internationally acclaimed young soprano **Lea Woods Friedman**; bass-baritone **Joshua Winograde** who, says the American Media mag, is "the one to keep our ears on"; mezzo-soprano **Jennifer Hines**, described by Opera News as having "a voice so rich and colored, she easily steals any scene in which she appears"; tenor **Scott Piper**; and pianist **Carrie-Anne Matheson**, praised by the New York Times for her "artistry and sensitivity." Wow!

Act II of "Beloved" will showcase Inno Sotto's gorgeous 40-piece collection, a guaranteed fashion tour de force.

The Virlanie Foundation gala last year, which Princess **Caroline** of Monaco attended, touched the lives of thousands of children who were victims of various forms of abuse and exploitation.

Gift of Life Inc. is a worldwide Rotary International Service Program that aims to help needy children up to the age of 18, who require corrective heart surgery. They will undergo open-heart surgery in a Gift of Life participating hospital. Gift of Life spokesperson **Chad Everett** will fly from Los Angeles to grace this must-go-to event, *palanggas*.

For tickets, reservations, or other information, call 8175926.

DAISY Salonga, Maffet Flores and Joan Querubin of Citibank, and Gary Hipe of Thai's accounting department

FANNIE Galang

PAOLO Atienza, Linnet Aguirre and Liz Claudio

TANYA Escaler, Louise Ravelo, Nino Zulueta and Jude Lee

FRO OLIVA, with Jan La'O, Bea Constantino, Vicky Montenegro and Angelo Comsti

TOLEON Tanada with Macky Coronel and Rocky Yam

CARY Lagdameo and wife Tina L.

PICHON Garcia and Andrew Lopez

YOUNG entrepreneurs Derrick Chiongbian, Anne Arcenas, JP Tanchanco, Chichi Atienza, Tina Trillana Lagdameo and Amina Aranaz

THAI Management team: Diana Guerrero, Dol Bhasavanich, Pisek Bongkojkerd, Emily Martinez, and Arlene Lopez

CYBER smart gals: Nora Africa, Rushelle Servidad, Elaine Pasigan, Celia Atendido, Irish Tamon, and Carla Luna

BOBBY Madrid, Malu Duenas, and Indren Naidoo

TESSA de Guzman, with Malu del Casal and Cherrlyn Yasay

MIKE Sandoval, Marietta Santos, Meldy Cojuangco, Inno Sotto, and Josine Elizalde

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Household help more likely to see ghosts

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

MY FIRST GRAND CHILD, 12-year-old Elan Alyssandra, sent me recently by text message the following question:

"Why is it that, in a house, the maids sometimes see spirits and experience scary things, but when the family or the owners are present, nothing happens and they don't see anything, even if the maids tell them the spirits are right there in their midst?"

This is one question that is also often asked by many people.

The simple answer is this: To see a spirit or other nonphysical realities, one has to have clairvoyant vision or what is known as the "third eye."

The third eye is not really a physical eye, but a mental or spiritual faculty of seeing. You see nonphysical reality with your mental eye, not with your physical eye. In fact, even if your eyes are closed you can see a spirit or ghost.

I know somebody who told me she saw a ghost standing at the foot of her bed one evening. Because of fear, she covered her head with the bed sheet and closed her eyes very tightly. But she could still see the ghost. Of course, because the ghost was both outside and inside her head!

In order not to see the ghost, we should raise the frequency of our brain waves from the alpha or theta level to the full waking state of beta. How? By jumping up and down or doing something physically strenuous like stationary running or breathing heavily, as if you're panting.

Such activities raise the frequency of the brain waves and therefore disconnect you from the spirit level, which has a slower cycle of brain waves.

The reason maids usually experience spirit manifestation or interference is that they are sensitive to the spirit world. Their brain functioning is dominantly on the right half of the neocortex, whereas more highly educated individuals are dominantly "left-brained."

The right brain is associated with emotion, imagination, intuition and the spirit world. The left brain, on the other hand is associated with logic, analysis, abstract thinking and mathematical reasoning.

When a person is very uptight, always on guard, highly skeptical and very analytical, his brain wave is almost always at beta level, meaning very physical, highly conscious of outside reality. It is seldom that one can see a spirit while running or physically active, like playing basketball.

Some people are simply sensitive to the spirit world, others are not. That's why not all can see ghosts or spirits. Not everybody has clairvoyant vision.

Another question Elan sent by text went like this: "Why doesn't the Bible believe in ghosts, while others believe in them? Also, doesn't the Bible say that when a person dies his spirit automatically goes to heaven or hell?"

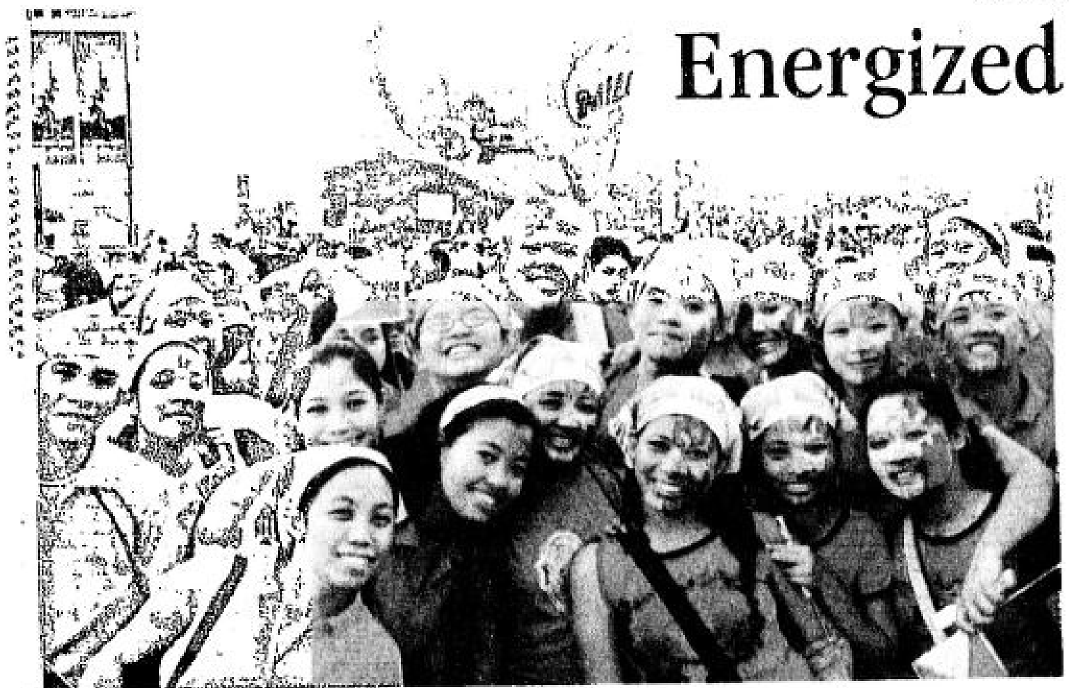
That is not correct. The Bible believes in ghosts. In fact, you will see many examples in both Old and New Testaments of spirits of the dead appearing to the living. In the Book of Samuel, Chapter 28, verse 3-14, you will find the story of King Saul who successfully communicated with the spirit of the prophet Samuel, through a medium at Endor.

It is not the Bible that does not believe in ghosts but the followers of Christ, specially the ecclesiastical priesthood. And the reason they do not believe in ghosts is precisely because of the belief that when a person dies, his spirit goes either to heaven or to hell, therefore it does not return to or remain on earth.

So they always attribute such manifestations not to spirits of the dead but to the devil or to one's fertile imagination. However, overwhelming evidence points to the reality of the existence of ghosts or spirits of the dead. We must distinguish between belief and fact. Hope my answer did not make you more confused.

Note: I will be conducting a Basic ESP and Intuition Development seminar Dec. 10-11 at Monte Vista Resort, Mimosa Clark Field, Angeles City. Interested parties may contact Riza Lim at 0917-8436043 or call 8107245 or 8926806.

Energized for SEAG opening day



YOUTH participants cheer at the opening of the 23rd SEA Games in Manila.

MILO PRODUCTS WERE GIVEN away free to the 200,000 people who attended the opening day of the 23rd South East Asian Games (SEAG) at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

The Olympic energy drink, a strong supporter of local sports development and one of the sponsors of the biennial event, set up tents around the grandstand to distribute the products.

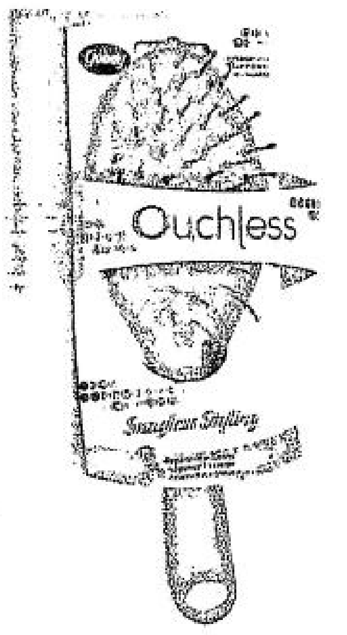
SEAG's opening day was attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo, Vice President Noli de Castro, Philippine SEA Games organizing committee chair Jose Cojuangco Jr., Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, and members of the diplomatic corps. Also present were executives of Nestlé and Milo led by Nestlé senior vice president and senior business executive manager for Beverages and Adult Nutrition Eugene David, Nestlé vice president and Milo brand manager Michelle Calo, and Milo sports executive Pat Gocong.

A highlight of the event was the parade of athletes from the 11 participating countries. The Philippine contingent was joined by Miss International Precious Lara Quigaman, television personality Angel Locsin and boxing champ Manny Pacquiao. Taekwondo champ and Milo athlete Marie Antoinette Rivero lit the SEA Games torch.

The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra, under the baton of Ryan Cayabyab, performed. It was later joined by Rivermaya.

TORCH bearer and Milo athlete Marie Antoinette Rivero

Hairbrush sales benefit breast cancer drive



THE OUCHLESS brush is the latest addition to Goody's pain-free hairstyling line.

GOODY HAS LAUNCHED the Comfort Meets Cause campaign featuring limited-edition pink Ouchless hairbrushes.

The campaign, aimed at supporting breast cancer research and survivor programs, is Goody's first participation in the drive to raise awareness of breast cancer.

Goody International sales manager Howard Wenbert, who visited the country recently, pointed out that hair loss was among the consequences of cancer and its management. The pink Ouchless brush promotion signaled the drive for empowerment of survivors.

He said proceeds of the campaign were going to the Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC), an international nonprofit organization providing comprehensive, relevant and timely educational material and empowerment activities to breast cancer survivors.

Goody's Comfort Meets Cause campaign is also conducting an auction of celebrity-autographed Ouchless pink brushes on the company website. Among the celebrities that signed the Ouchless brushes were Halle Berry, Salma Hayek and Jessica Simpson.

Ouchless brushes are the latest addition to Goody's pain-free hairstyling line. They are fitted with one-piece bristles that are attached below the surface of the brush to prevent the hair strands from getting caught. Ouchless brushes are the first to be made for specific hair types. They come with three different cushions for fine, medium or thick hair and are easy to clean.

Goody is distributed by Good Products Phils. Inc. and available in department stores nationwide.

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The 5 Ds to wellness

From page C1

a healthy eating plan (a diet friendly to you) that is both agreeable and doable. Not one that is ambitious and unattainable. Example: From a high-protein diet rich in red meats to a vegan diet. Find the middle ground. Minimize or decrease the saturated fats and increase your fish intake. Add more veggies to your daily intake.

3. Drive

An immediate by-product of the first two Ds is drive. It's the fuel you will need for your tank. After all, a car cannot run without fuel. And your goals will not fly without motivation.

A highly motivated individual has the necessary fuel to go on without hesitation. This spells the difference between success or failure. In translation: Each morning, motivate yourself to get out of bed with energy and a smile.

Chances are, you can talk yourself out of a lazy or bad mood. Some people force or drag themselves out of bed, others just slide sideways like a sloth or reluctantly sit up and sigh. All these common begin-the-day habits can be more damaging to your entire being than you think.

The mind-body connection is so strong that if you do feel lazy, you may talk your body into becoming lazy. And there goes the morning exercise. There goes the fruits and oatmeal, replaced with ham and eggs.

Drive your laziness and blues away. Get up and go—now. If you allow today to slip through your fingers, you may also lose tomorrow. In words, "I affirm."

4. Discipline

One of the most challenging of Ds is discipline. Mastering the first three Ds will most naturally and definitely lead to discipline. This is what gives structure to your goal—a game plan to reach your destination. A plan of action that must be followed with perseverance can only happen through discipline. In translation: "I'll do it."

This means you will do your chosen course of action—cardiovascular exercise three times a week, flexibility exercises twice a week, daily meditation and prayer, massage once weekly, healthy eating daily, six to eight hours' sleep nightly, eight to 10 glasses of water daily, no smoking/drugs/alcohol, etc.

5. Delight

The most delicious D of all is the delight you will feel when you face the mirror and say "I'm pleased with myself." This is the stage you reach after graduating from the first to fourth D—one you richly deserve.

Note that you begin with a feeling of desire and end with yet another feeling—delight. And so, this truth is all the more emphasized—that everything begins and ends in the heart.

And this is the heart of the matter with the 5 Ds to wellness.

So affirm with me: "Health and happiness are mine for my heart has spoken."

Love and light!

PAGCOR president and COO Rafael "Butch" A. Francisco (second from left) congratulates doctors Juliet G. Cervantes and Joven C. Cuanang, president and chair, respectively, of the newly formed Philippine Association for the Study of Liver Diseases Inc. Francisco led the induction of PASLD officers. PASLD aims to promote the development, propagation, practice and application of advanced knowledge on liver diseases and to provide venues and assistance for education, training, research and collaborations with physicians, scientists, professionals and organizations. Behind Francisco are PASLD officers doctors John Arnel N. Pangilinan and Joseph C. Bocobo.

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What Is Asthma?

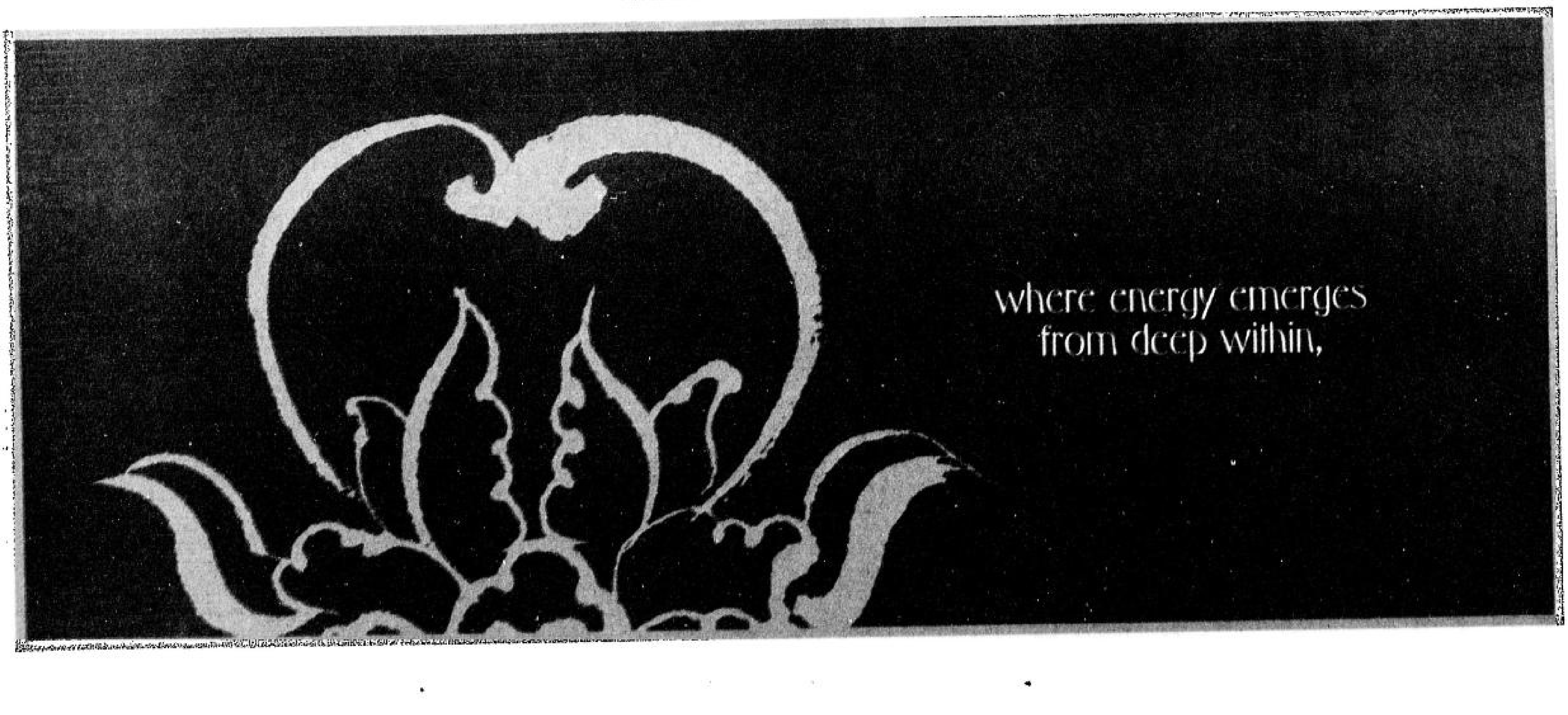
Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease of the airways which causes symptoms such as cough, chest tightness, breathlessness or gurgly chest ("halak"). These symptoms are caused by obstruction of the airways. The airways of asthmatic patients are very sensitive to a variety of stimuli such as pollutants, allergens, respiratory infections, cold air, exercise or emotions. Allergy is a major predisposing factor for asthma, such that around 90% of children with asthma have an allergic component. The clinical history and physical examination play a major in the diagnosis of asthma. Doctors may also request for lung function tests or do therapeutic trial to confirm the diagnosis. An allergy skin test may be done to determine the specific allergic trigger to which the patient is sensitive to. Management of asthma includes avoidance of the patient's asthma triggers and the use of medications. If there is poor response to avoidance measures and medications or if the patient is already experiencing adverse effects from his medications, immunotherapy or allergy shots may be given by an allergist.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our seven-year medical service provider from FortMed Medical Clinics in Laguna, Dr. Mary Anne R. Castor. Doc Mi-Anne, as she commonly addressed by her patients, is specializes in Pediatric Allergology & Immunology. She obtained her medical degree from UP College of Medicine. She took her residency training for Pediatrics in 1994 and later had her subspecialization training in Allergology and Clinical Immunology in 1996 from UP-PGH Medical Center. Dra. Castor is affiliated with the Philippine Pediatric Society, Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, Philippine Medical Association and Muntinlupa Medical Society. She is also a Clinical Associate Professor at PGH-College of Medicine, University of the Philippines, Manila.

MEDICard members may visit her for consultation services at FortMed Medical Clinics-Sta Rosa, Mondays & Fridays from 12noon to 3pm, Wednesdays, 12noon to 2pm

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky



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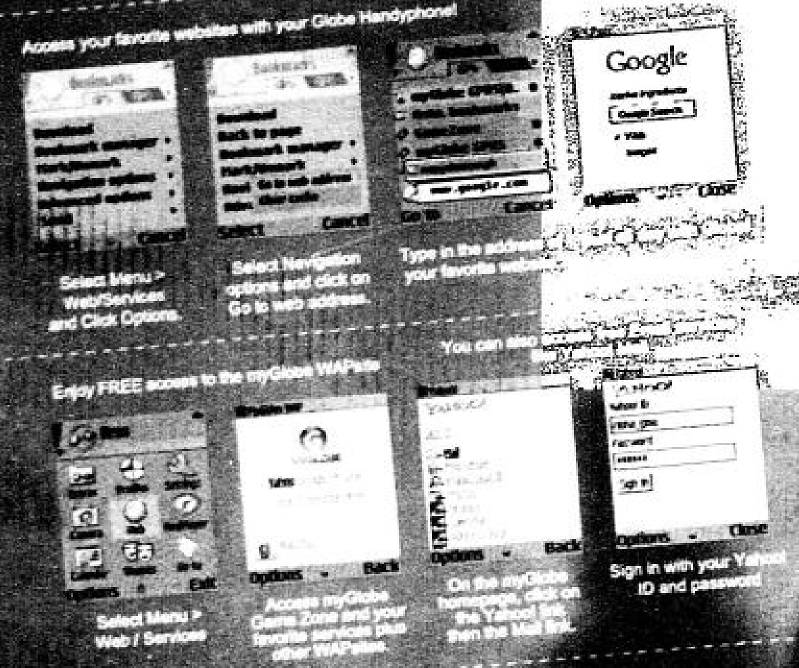

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